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Pedagogy and profit: Multiethnic literature, gender and young adult publishing

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ABSTRACT

Layfield, Allison S. Ph.D., Purdue University, August 2016. Pedagogy and Profit: Multiethnic Literature, Gender, and Young Adult Publishing. Major Professor: Bill Mullen.

This project argues that the adult/young adult division has the effect of maintaining social difference—especially along the lines of race and gender—while simultaneously ignoring the process of maintaining social hierarchies that occurs during the publication, reviewing and educational selection processes. Chapter One brings together the history of YAL as a pedagogical tool with its publishing history in order to show that both forces have redefined the genre in response to changing notions of social responsibility tied to American citizenship. There were five major eras within the history of young adult literature, each of which responded to changing notions of citizenship. Chapter Two is a case study of *The House on Mango Street* (1984) by Sandra Cisneros that examines the effect of texts popularized by young readers on commercial and small press publishing. *The House on Mango Street* serves as an example of how multicultural education not only influenced the classroom, but together with small, independent presses, increased publication of racially diverse authors during the 1980s and 1990s. Chapter Three interrogates assumptions about the gender bias in young adult publishing that privleges women writers. This chapter reveals how a post-feminist view of publishing creates a

false assumption that women dominate YAL at the publication, distribution and consumer levels. Chapter Four outlines the development of "militarization" stories through analysis of Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* series and Orson Scott Card's *Ender's* Game. The marketing mechanisms for twenty-first century militarization stories promote crossover reading across gender and age lines while simultaneously undercutting a text's social criticism. *Pedagogy and Profit* suggests that the study of the publishing industry and educational reform is necessary to scholarship on twentieth century literature.

INTRODUCTION

In January of 2013, debut novelist Gensese Davis published an editorial in *Publisher's Weekly* about her decision *not* to publish her first novel as young adult fiction. Davis detailed the conversation she repeatedly engaged in with editors and agents about publishing her book as young adult literature (YA or YAL):

> Publisher: "It's YA, right?"
>
> Me: "Not exactly; it's adult with a YA crossover. The book does ride the line of YA because the protagonist learns about herself and her family, so it has that 'coming of age/resolving family conflict' feel... But the plot takes place on a college campus and has more adult content than full YA books, i.e., there are a few curse words in the book, and the reading level is bit more intellectual than a typical high school YA book. However, there is no extreme adult content—no romance, no sex, no abuse, no violence, no paranormal activity, etc. I suppose you could consider it YA if people don't mind that she's in college, not high school."[1]

According to Davis, she was repeatedly told that without revision of the book for a younger audience, the publishers would "have to pass." The description of YAL in the

[1] Gensese Davis, "Overcoming the Ya Obsession: A Debut Author Sticks to Her New Adult Guns," *Publishers Weekly*, 2013/01/21/.

passage above reveals the genre boundaries that many writers maintain about YAL: the prose is not intellectually rigorous, and there is a coming-of-age plot which does not include "extreme adult content." Davis's decision to publish with a smaller press as "new adult" (read "older young adult"), also reveals why young adult literature is a hot genre for emerging writers: the formal experimentation, the intellectual reflection on coming-of-age, and the inclusion of settings and content important to contemporary life (technology, the college experience) provide writers a more experimental space than literary fiction. Davis ends her article by advising aspiring writers to stay true to their work in the face of a publishing "obsession for YA," but her negotiation of genre extends beyond a simple trend in publishing. The decision to publish as young adult literature is not only about freedom in content, but as will be discussed in this dissertation, it is also about labeling an author's work as high or low art, the financial future of an artist, and the social politics that shape the publishing industry.

My desire to study both the production and reception of young adult literature depends upon my assumption, in line with Pierre Bourdieu, that aesthetic value is not intrinsic to good art (and literature), but instead the aesthetic is a historically produced category that functions as a means of maintaining social hierarchies. Bourdieu argued that the aesthetic appreciation of art marks the acquisition of "cultural capital," which indicates the intellectual and social superiority of the elite classes.[2] Acquiring cultural capital is a way of demonstrating one's prestige in addition to one's wealth. The problem with assuming the aesthetic is natural to artwork is that it denies that art is used to

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[2] Pierre Bordieu, "Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste," in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leach (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2010), 1665.

maintain social hierarchies, and in doing so perpetuates social inequalities.[3] For Bourdieu, the study of art will be incomplete until it considers:

> the entire set of social mechanisms which make possible the figure of the artist…[and] the emergence of a set of specific institutions which are required for the functioning of the of the economy of cultural goods—places of exhibition (museums, galleries, etc.) institutions of consecration (academies, salons, etc.) institutions for the reproduction of producers (art schools, etc.) and specialized agents (dealers, critics, art historians, collectors, etc.) endowed with the *dispositions* objectively required by the field and with *specific categories of perception and appreciation,* which are irreducible to those in common use and which are capable of imposing a specific measure on the value of artists and their products.[4]

In this dissertation, I sketch a larger picture of the artistic field of literature by examining how the institutions of consecration (professional review venues, universities), places of exhibition (bookstores, commercial publishing), and specialized agents (literary agents, editors, critics) preserve the cultural capital of literary fiction by defining it against young adult fiction (YAL). Literature, as Bourdieu discusses it, is an acquired taste--the perception and appreciation of "literary" work emphasizes value as inherent in the form, style, etc., of a given text. In contrast, young adult literature does not require specialized education for appreciation. Young adult literature is perceived as requiring

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[3] Ibid., 1670.

[4] "Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field," in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leach (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc. , 2010), 1677.

less literary expertise, and is generally appreciated for the content, character and pacing of texts rather than how they fit into aesthetic literary history.[5] The aesthetic is associated with literary fiction. Because of its higher aesthetic status, the stories and characters that make up the world of literary fiction are socially accepted as valid subjects in American culture; those stories and characters relegated to the world of young adult literature (romance, adventure, children, women's stories) are considered immature and unworthy of aesthetic recognition. This dissertation reveals how the process of dividing writers into the categories of YAL and literary fiction preserves social differences and hierarchies.

Bourdieu's theories provide a much needed method for the study of young adult literature. A materialist approach to art is inescapable when studying young adult literature because so much of the production and dissemination of YAL is about economic value and exchange.[6] Part of Bourdieu's distinction between high and low art relies on an inverse relationship between artistic value and economic value. He claims that the more economic value literature accumulates, the less cultural capital it is granted. For example, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries poetry has little to no economic value, and it is positioned as the highest literary art form.[7] This inverse relationship is particularly important as a factor in the literary elite's rejection of YAL. Young adult literature is a profit-making business that often supports the production of literary fiction, yet its economic value comes from its popularity, and it is this popularity that is rejected

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[5] While this is generally true of YAL, there are now attempts to assign cultural capital to young adult fiction through the Michael L. Printz Award, and various small presses and imprints that claim to publish only aesthetically valuable YAL. The effects of this will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

[6] By "materialist" I refer to an approach that takes into consideration the production, distribution and reception of young adult books as material objects within specific economic and political contexts.

[7] Bordieu, "Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field," 1671.

by the literary elite as it comes from "lower, course, vulgar" concerns present in YAL content. In order to determine the boundaries between young adult literature and literary fiction, the relationships between profit and the production of YAL must be examined.

The pedagogical and commercial drives of the education and publishing systems are transparent about passing down cultural values and reproducing economic capital; this transparency is a major factor in the exclusion of YAL from the world of literary fiction. Young adult literature is often seen as didactic in its attempt to transmit appropriate behavior and cultural values to young readers. YAL is also driven by the economic concerns of publishers, who brand books across multimedia forms, target specific demographics, and market to schools through various media outlets in order to make enough profit off of YAL to support other publishing projects (literary fiction). In contrast, the systems that produce and reproduce literary fiction obscure the relationship between literature, its ideological function and economics; literary fiction is situated as autonomous art free from economic, social and material concerns. Yet the characters and stories that are awarded "literary" status are seen as valid subjects, and our perception of who is a valid subject in the United States has social and economic impacts on the lives of real people. Those subjects designated as "young adult" in literature are disparaged both within and outside of literature. The adult/young adult division has the effect of maintaining social difference—especially along the lines of race and gender--while simultaneously ignoring the process of maintaining social hierarchies that occurs during the publication, reviewing and educational selection processes.

Chapter One intervenes in YAL discourse by examining the historical development of young adult literature in terms of its pedagogical function as well as its

economic function as determined by teachers, parents and publishers. Typically, scholars consider the birth of YAL as tied to the Stratemeyer Syndicate's publishing of *The Hardy Boys* and *Nancy Drew* series during the late 1920s-early 30s and the creation of a specific category for teen readers. The next important period marker of the genre occurs in the 1960s and 1970s with the problem novel, and next there is a return to the publishing strategies of the forties with the return of mass-market romance and horror series in the 1980s-90s. And finally there is a discussion of the global gender and generational crossover hits in the late 90s up through our present moment. There has been little discussion of how these two driving forces—pedagogy and profit—interacted in response to social and political issues to change the direction of young adult literature. My historical reframing of young adult history focuses on how the pedagogical and economic concerns surrounding young adult literature were both influenced by a desire to condition young adults to become ideal citizens of the United States.

Chapter Two analyzes the influence of small presses and multicultural education on young adult literature. I argue that the 1970s-1980s was an important moment because the American literary canon was restructured after the Civil Rights movements to better reflect the gendered, racial and ethnic make-up of the United States. In particular, the multicultural education movement and small presses helped change who is validated as a "literary" subject, especially in terms of race and socioeconomic class. As a result, the tradition of the American bildungsroman significantly changed. The reception of works by emerging authors as young adult literature affected the racial dynamics of commercial publishing, the financial viability of small presses, and the literary reputations of authors.

The third chapter examines assumption about the gendered structure of YAL, and current debates about the detriment of women's control over the production, creation and distribution of YAL. Ultimately, I argue that the concerns of feminist scholars in the 1970s-1980s are still valid today, but the means of devaluing women's writing have been obscured—by making a space for women within YAL, it *appear*s writers, agents, and editors favor women writers and girl readers over their male counterparts, but in actuality YAL is the most gender neutral area of publishing. The misunderstanding and misrepresentation of this gender parity has resulted in a post-feminist backlash against women writers that reveals the methods by which the suppression of women's literature continues to operate in the early twenty-first century.

Chapter Four argues that there has been a major shift in how YAL conceptualizes the role of young adults in militarization; we have transitioned from the soldier's coming-of-age story to a broader narrative that looks at the militarization of soldiers, civilians, politicians and the media. With this shift have come changes to multimedia marketing mechanisms that have led to the dissolution of long-held beliefs about readers who cross gender and age boundaries. These stories and mechanisms also bridge the adult/young adult divide, and are creating a space for a previously hard to reach demographic in the 16-25 year-old age range. While this marks a shift in understanding gendered and age-related reading behaviors, these new marketing mechanisms also undercut the social messages of non-violence and anti-consumerism that comment on the maintenance of social hierarchies through militarization.

What is Young Adult Literature?

The term "young adult literature" has developed out of a history of adults trying to label the stage of life between childhood and adulthood. Before young adult literature, the genre was called "adolescent," "juvenile," and "teen" literature. The current term, "young adult" literature is in favor because it does not have the negative connotations associated with the previous terms and is thus more marketable as a bookstore category to indicate books written for and marketed to teenagers.[8] However, authors of young adult fiction often claim that they do not consider audience age as a part of the writing process.[9] Thus, when scholars say that YAL is written for young adults, we are actually referring to the category under which books are published, not the author's intended audience.

Scholars and teachers are now looking at the effects of this literature on its audience, and consider YAL as any literature "teens choose to read as opposed to what they are required to read."[10] However the books which teens are required to read can become associated with young adults, and should therefore be considered young adult literature. Cole's argument that teens choose to read books written for them and marketed to them fails to recognize that while teens may not choose to read "classics" like the novels mentioned above, reading choice does not negate the influence required readings can have on young adults. For instance, *To Kill a Mockingbird* is both required reading

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[8] Pamela Burress Cole, *Young Adult Literature in the 21st Century*, Young Adult Literature in the Twenty-First Century (Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2009), 49.

[9] Angelina Benedetti, "Not Just for Teens: With More and More Adults Reading Ya Books, It's Time to Get to Know the Literature and Promote It to Grown-Ups of All Ages," *Library Journal* 136, no. 11 (2011): 42.

[10] Cole, *Young Adult Literature in the 21st Century*, 50.

and often listed as readers' favorite book of the twentieth century. I therefore expand the definition of young adult literature beyond books published for teen readers to include those books typically associated with young adult readers.[11]

According to this definition, young adult literature is not limited to an age-based category, but centers on the coming-of-age narrative. Nilsen and Donelson describe such literature as texts "that inform truthfully about the wider world so as to allow readers to engage with difficult and challenging issues" or themes "that allow the possibility of emotional and intellectual growth."[12] Pam B. Cole describes coming-of-age moments as the driving conflict of young adult novels, especially in relation to maturity, sexuality, interpersonal relationships, etc.[13] Young adult narratives are primarily concerned with the "difficult and oftentimes adult issues that arise during an adolescent's journey toward identity."[14] This definition is very similar to that of the bildungsroman, a coming-of-age narrative in which a young adult learns to balance personal desire against societal expectations of acceptable behavior. The definition of YAL that I will use in this dissertation is thus broader than most. I consider young adult literature any work that is written about, published for and marketed to teenagers, or those texts primarily read by young adults. Young adult novels are those bildungsromans narrated from a position of

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[11] This expansion of the term YAL is especially important when considering that books published for adult readers can be negatively received in literary circles if critics claim that the novel is best suited for young adults, as will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

[12] Alleen Pace Nilsen and Kenneth L. Donelson, *Literature for Today's Young Adults*, 8th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2009), 19.

[13] Cole, *Young Adult Literature in the 21st Century*, 49.

[14] Jonathon Stevens, "Young Adult: A Book by Any Other Name…Defining the Genre," *The ALAN Review* 35, no. 1 (2007): 40.

young adulthood, whether that is by teenage protagonists writing from their current moment or adult protagonists retrospectively describing events.

Methodology

Since Bourdieu only briefly discusses the role of the audience, I also considerTony Bennett's concept of the "reading formation" because it looks at the particular role readers play in the artistic field. This reading formation is described as a "set of discursive and intertextual determinations that organize and animate the practice of reading, connecting texts and readers in specific relations to one another by constituting readers as reading subjects and texts as objects-to-be-read in particular ways."[15] Bennett's "reading formation" describes the way that books operate as material objects that have different uses in different reading contexts. The "reading formation" also recognizes that a text plays a role in the formation of its readers, and readers also play a role in the formation of a text's meaning.[16] It is therefore necessary to explore what texts themselves do for readers, and how the texts work with, against, or in another relationship with the reader's historical and social context.

The concept of reading formations also helps me ground my study of publishing practices. While I consider the responses of reviewers, critics, writers and teachers of young adult literature, my discussion of publishing practices includes a study of a previously ignored reading formation—publishers and literary agents. The decisions

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[15] Tony Bennett, "Texts in History: The Determinations of Readings and Their Texts," in *Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies*, ed. James L. and Philip Goldstein Machor (New York: Routledge, 2001), 66.

[16] Ibid., 69.

these people make about the production and marketing of literature is evidence of their reading formation and how that reading formation assigns value to texts, which in turn shapes other reading formations.

Although Bennett helps me frame my method of study, I disagree with his suggestion that the "relations between textual phenomena and social and political processes can be theorized adequately only by placing in suspension the text as it appears to be given to us in our own reading formation." I reject the notion that there can be or should be a disinterested, objective way in which to study reading formations. I do agree with John Frow's conclusions about Bourdieu and Bennett. Frow states that cultural capital is inescapable, and intellectuals have a vested self-interest in maintaining control of the cultural value assigned to art.[17] This self-interest is apparent in the debates over young adult literature. Since its development, scholars have been arguing for its literary value in order to justify their own pedagogy, reading tastes and their desire for scholarly attention to the genre. While I am not going to directly engage in this discourse of value, I am not attempting absolute objectivity in my choices of texts and topics in this dissertation. I agree with Frow that it is important that "intellectuals do not denegate their own status as possessors of cultural capital; that they accept and struggle with the contradictions that this entails; and that their cultural politics, right across the spectrum of cultural texts, should be openly and without embarrassment presented as their politics."[18] To that end, I acknowledge my position in a community of women writers who

[17] John Frow, "Economies of Value," ibid., 313.
[18] Ibid.

experience the continual, pervasive sexism of the publishing industry, and as a teacher who chooses literary texts and tries to teach across social differences.

Because of this political stance, I have vested interest in continuing the work of feminist literary studies. This entire project has been shaped by an assumption that young adult literature is believed to be a woman's genre in which women writers, editors, agents and women/girl readers control the methods of production, distribution and make up the majority of the genre's readers. As such, YAL is an important location for critical feminist scholarship. My study of YAL necessarily relies not only on the materialist reception theories mentioned about, but also on feminist reception methodologies. One of the methodological models for this study is Joanna Russ's *How to Suppress Women's Writing* (1983). Russ uses a feminist reception approach to the study of literature by analyzing the reviews and criticisms of women's artistic work over several hundred years. Russ's project creates a timeline and a method of categorizing the various methods historically used to bar women from literary acclaim. She combines this method with personal accounts from women's diaries, stories from her contemporaries, and personal accounts of her own experiences with sexism. This combination of documenting personal experiences of sexism with literary criticism and research is typical in feminist work; my adoption of these methods broadens access to important information regarding the reception of young adult literature.

Barbara Smith's "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism" (1980) is also an important methodological model for its examination of sexism and heterosexism in the reception of black women writers by male and white feminist critics. Smith's primary argument is that a black feminist literary criticism is necessary to better critique and respond to the sexual

and racial politics in black women's writing. Smith's work functions as an important model for my own work because it shows how the institutions of consecration (anthologies of literature) and specialized agents (literary critics, feminists) both actively and unconsciously relegate black women writers to non-literary status through literature reviews. While the review mechanism was the primary method of estranging black women's work from the literary canon, I argue that relegating women's writing to young adult literature functions in a similar way; YAL *appears* to make space for the work of women writers, but in reality this alternative space isolates women writers from the prestige and validation awarded to adult literary fiction authors. Russ and Smith are also important as forerunners of contemporary feminist reception studies projects that use quantitative methods to examine gender bias within the publishing industry.

Ultimately, it is important to recognize that the methodology used in this project are a reflection of my political goals for this project: I want to document the ways in which young adult literature functions as an experimental, alternative social space that is commercially and artistically successful, but is also consciously used to maintain social hierarchies.

CHAPTER 1. PEDAGOGY, PROFIT AND CITIZENSHIP IN YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

Throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, the bildungsroman has been central to young adult literature as a means for older generations to communicate with younger generations about normative topics and behaviors. Feminist and cultural studies scholar, Catherine Driscoll, claims that late modernity adolescence is conceived as "a disruption to childhood and prior to a projected adulthood. Adolescence also functions as an explanation of the indispensable difficulty of becoming a subject, agent, or independent or self-aware person."[19] Driscoll's concept of adolescence mirrors the definition of the bildungsroman, revealing an important connection between literary form and our perception of adolescent development. Driscoll also claims that "Youth has been consistently important to cultural analysis because…youth names a field in which society reproduces itself and marks changes through the incorporation and exclusion of individuals and groups in relation to social systems that precede and contextualize them."[20] Thus, adolescence is both a period of coming into subjectivity and of learning about how society incorporates and excludes groups within the larger social system.

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[19] Catherine Driscoll, *Girls: Feminine Adolescence in Popular Culture & Cultural Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 7.

[20] Ibid., 10.

Young adult literature is considered by adults as a pedagogical tool to aid young people in their subject formation. The genre is based on the desire to educate the young on American "citizenship," in so far as a citizen participates in the civil, political and social development of a community.[21] Citizenship includes participation in the realms of law and liberty, rights in the political process, as well as the sharing of economic welfare and cultural heritage of a society.[22] In her study of the relationship between eighteenth century American children's literature and citizenship, Courtney Weikle-Mills claims that children's literature "aligned public and private arenas of political participation" and the "obedient child [has been an] apt representation of the ideal subject."[23] Since the Civil War, literature for children and young adults has maintained a focus on the role of the child citizen. However, young adult literature has oscillated between two depictions of the young citizen. The first encourages children to participate in the nation's adult politics and society, and the second limits young adults to social and economic participation in the "private" arena of adolescent culture and politics. Each of these concepts of the child citizen dominates at different times according to changes in educational, library and publishing systems. In both conceptions, social participation is demonstrated through gendered behavior. This chapter examines the shifts in constructions of adolescent citizenship during five major periods of YAL development: the Post-Civil War era (1865-1904), the Mass Market era (1930s-1950s), The Problem Novel era (1960s-1970s), the

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[21] Jeremy Roche, "Children: Rights, Participation and Citizenship," *Childhood: A Global Journal of Child Research* 6, no. 4 (1999): 479.

[22] Ibid., 480.

[23] Courtney A. Weikle-Mills, ""Learn to Love Your Book": The Child Reader and Affectionate Citizenship," *Early American Literature* 43, no. 1 (2008): 36.

Romance Revival and the rise of Multicultural Literature (1980s), and the emergence of the Crossover Era (1990s-present).

Literature in each of these periods reimagined young adults as social and political participants in different ways, yet still portrayed citizenship as participation either in an isolated adolescent community or in the larger national community. After the Civil War, the development of national concerns over young adults as well as the contributions of libraries and publishers helped shape the emergence of the YAL market at the turn of the century. In the early twentieth century, the Stratemeyer Syndicate and other publishers expanded into marketing specifically for teenagers, marking the official start of the category of young adult literature with *The Hardy Boys* and *Nancy Drew* series. The rise of mass market teenage publishing in the 1930s-1950s borught the tradition of gendered literature into the new teen genre. It also resulted in a shift toward portraying adolescents only within their isolated (private) teenage cultures, leaving them out of adult (public) political worlds. The next major landmark in young adult literature occurred with the emergence of a more socially conscious literature for young adults that directly discussed the social differences and hierarchies in the lives of teenagers in the 1960s-1980s. *The Outsiders* is credited with the shift toward "the problem novel" in YAL publishing, which went beyond the boundaries of family and romance to deal with real social problems facing adolescents. The last major shift in YAL began in the late 1990s and is ongoing today. The period of the "New Adult" and "Crossover" novels broke all of the publishing rules for YAL, beginning with J.K. Rowling's 1997 publication of the *Harry Potter*. Crossover novels not only crossed age and gender boundaries related to reading habits, but also textual boundaries as publishing infotainment conglomerates create YAL

phenomena that encompass books, films, and retail products like makeup, toys, and clothing lines.

1.1 1865-1904: The Civil War and Concerns about American Youth

The post-Civil War period from 1865-1904 was important to the development of young adult literature because it marks two important shifts: the first was a change in how adults imagined children and adolescents as characterized by rebellion, and the second was a change in the use of literature as a pedagogical tool for shaping the moral and intellectual development of children. Young adult literature emerged in the 1930s-1940s in response to these changes.

Early American children's books for children were intended to deliver religious morals and to develop the habits needed for religious study. As children's literature historian Leonard Marcus notes, the "Puritan belief that indulgence in fiction represented a fateful misuse of the essential life skill of reading set the pattern for what was to remain the central debate about juvenile literature through the time of the Civil War, with reverberations lasting well into the next century."[24] For the Puritans, reading was a means of religious practice and literacy helped to develop moral citizens.

The stories emerging during and after the Civil War maintained a focus on the role of the child in relationship to citizenship, but children's literature changed its portrayal of how children should engage in civil participation. Until the early twentieth century, there was no sense that teenagers were separate beings, instead there were only

[24] Leonard S. Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature* (Boston: Boston : Houghton Mifflin Co., 2008), 2.

adults and children. Though the idea of adolescence developed gradually, the seeds of a separate literature for adolescents were already present in late 19th century.[25] During the Civil War, when the United States was facing the harsh reality of living in a state of violence, adults had competing concerns about childhood; children were seen as growing up too fast, matching the fast pace of American life, and yet adults wanted children indoctrinated with the values that would place them on the morally righteous side of the war.[26] Adults were concerned that the rebellion of the young against the old paralleled the rebellion of the Southern states, and religious and other leaders began to call for

> a new juvenile literature that while morally responsible was also adamantly non prescriptive, a literature that showed respect for the young readers' intelligence and trust in their already having acquired a basic understanding of right and wrong, and that on occasion might serve up tales of rebellion to satisfy vicariously the urge for the real thing.[27]

The result was a move away from the didactic nature of the early religious children's literature, but also perhaps a move toward fiction with a focus on story and characters rather than moralizing commentary. In her discussion of early American children's literature, Courtney Weikle-Mills claims that during the eighteenth century, children's books "acted as an intermediary step in the political chain of associations…that was a

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[25] Michael Cart and ebrary Inc., Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism, (Chicago: American Library Association,, 2011), http://login.ezproxy.lib.purdue.edu/login?url=http://site.ebrary.com/lib/purdue/Doc?id=10469296. 8.

[26] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 32-33.

[27] Ibid., 34.

training for, and enactment of, the citizen's relationship to the nation and law."[28] Before the Civil War, this meant a commitment to governance and each citizen's choice to abide by communal law. The training for this kind of citizenship was expected to occur within the domestic sphere of the home.[29] During the Civil War, books began to encourage children to participate in the war. Children's Civil War literature was a mix of "Battlefront adventure novels by Oliver Optic…serious commentaries addressed to the young on the evils of slavery, and sober tales that emphasized children's added responsibilities at home while their fathers served on the battlefield."[30] The variety of these texts shows the changing approaches to children's literature; rather than direct moral instruction these texts ranged from highly glamorized war adventures to strictly educational, non-fiction tracts.

The bildungsroman emerging after 1864, concerned with the rebelliousness of the young focused on developing the gendered qualities deemed necessary to growing up during a time of slavery and the Civil War. Up until the 1840s, boys books and girls books had only differed superficially for marketing purposes, such as Mary Ann Kilber's *Memoirs of a Pincushion* and *Memoirs of a Peg-Top,* in which the eponymous toys are gendered in order to sell the same book to two audiences. The book varied its content according to "supposed different interests of girls and boys, rather than on different

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[28] Weikle-Mills, ""Learn to Love Your Book": The Child Reader and Affectionate Citizenship," 38.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 33.

socializing aims."[31] But as the market for books grew, and the Victorian era ushered in a period of transatlantic concern about gendered spheres, children's books were increasingly divided between sentimental, domestic tales allotted to girls and the adventure stories written for boys .[32] These categories carried over into young adult literature because it was assumed that "the man's role will take him into the great world to engage in fierce battles of empire." The "pluck and enterprise" as well as the independence of the adventure story hero was deemed appropriate for boys.[33] In contrast, girls' books encouraged girls to value "obedience, self-sacrifice, and the docility…the virtues" necessary for women who would remain dependent on men as wives and daughters.[34]

Both sets of gendered characteristics were then constructed as valuable for maintaining the nation during Civil War, as can be seen in two highly popular texts of the time, Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) and Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868). *Huckleberry Finn* is an adventure story in which the titular hero must balance his childish desire for adventure against the adult forces trying to "sivilze" him. His caretakers, the widow Douglas and Miss Watson teach him to sleep indoors, how to read and write, and about the manners of polite society. While Huck learns to adapt to many of these civilized behaviors, his moment of turmoil comes when he must weigh his own

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[31] Elizabeth Segel, "'As the Twig Is Bent…': Gender and Childhood Reading," in *Gender and Reading : Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts*, ed. Elizabeth A. Flynn and Patrocinio P. Schweickart (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 168.

[32] Ibid., 168-69.

[33] Ibid., 174.

[34] Ibid.

desire to protect his friend and runaway slave, Jim, against an American belief that he should support slavery:

> I begun to get it through my head that he [Jim] was most free—and who was to blame for it? Why, me. …It hadn't ever come home to me before, what this thing was that I was doing. But now it did; and it stayed with me, and scorched me more and more. I tried to make out to myself that I weren't to blame, because I didn't run Jim off from his rightful owner; but it weren't no use, conscience up and says, every time, 'But you knowed he was running for his freedom, and you could a paddled ashore and told somebody.' That was so—I couldn't get around that, no way.[35]

Although many parents and authorities criticized the rebellious Huck, the plucky "bad-boy" hero became a staple of boy's literature.[36] While Twain's tale advocated independence and adventure for boys, Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* is openly didactic about the characteristics expected of girls, and their roles as citizens during the Civil War. In the first chapter, the March girls must forgo their Christmas presents because their mother "thinks we ought not to spend money for pleasure, when our men are suffering so in the army." She explains that women "can't do much, but we can make our little sacrifices and ought to do so gladly."[37] The girls are reminded in a letter from their father that "while we wait [for an end to the war] we may all work, so that these

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[35] Mark Twain and Michael Patrick Hearn, *The Annotated Huckleberry Finn : Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (Tom Sawyer's Comrade)* (New York: Norton, 2001), 153.

[36] Steven Mailloux, "Rhetorical Hermeneutics and Reception Study; Huckleberry Finn and 'the Bad Boy Boom'," *Reconceptualizing American literary/cultural studies; rhetoric, history and politics in the humanities* (1996).

[37] Loisa May Alcott, Little Women, (1868). ch.1.

hard days be not wasted" and as girls, their work is to "conquer themselves so beautifully that when I come back…I may be fonder and prouder than ever of my little women."[38] The girls then decree that they will give up the childish traits undesirable in women: Amy will stop being selfish, Meg vain, Jo temperamental, and Beth will try to overcome shyness to become an appropriately social hostess. Their behavioral conformity is especially important during the war in order to maintain some form of civilization outside of war. Their behavior is meant to support a father who is expected to be dutiful, dedicated and brave in the army. In general, the bildungsroman of the twentieth century has remained relatively constant in its portrayal of a gendered transition into adulthood.

The inclusion of children as citizens in the post-Civil War era extended beyond literature to the creation of physical and economic spaces for youth. Libraries had traditionally denied access to children based on their behavior and noisiness, but by the turn of the century most libraries had created separate spaces for children, albeit mostly in hallways, basements or other undesirable locations within the library.[39] A similar spatial separation was taking place within the publishing industry. From the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, American publishing had been an outgrowth of the book selling business; booksellers were printers and publishers, and preferred "steady-sellers" to bestsellers.[40] They served local regions, and it was from this system of publishing that larger bookstores and publishing houses eventually emerged. By 1820,

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[38] Ibid.

[39] Christine A. Jenkins, "The History of Youth Services Librarianship: A Review of the Research Literature," *Libraries & Culture* 35, no. 1 (2000): 125.

[40] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 9.

Samuel Wood and Mahlon Day became the first of these bookseller-publishers to begin establishing themselves in "juvenile trade." Famous publishers and adult magazines began to branch off into the children's magazine industry. The first magazine focused on children, *Our Young Folks: An illustrated magazine for Boys and Girls* emerged in 1865 by the same publishers of *Atlantic Monthly*, and embraced the new children's literature philosophy that reduced moral instruction in favor of artistic merit.[41] A similar publication, *Oliver Optics Magazine*, was used to scout for talent for a publisher as well as to dispense advice to parents about literature suitable for young readers.[42] These magazines intertwined an adult audience's desire for pedagogically valuable literature with the economic goals of publishing children's literature.

The advent of children's magazines reveal a pattern of genre development that would become central not only to children's literature, but to the development of YAL as well. The magazines created separate spaces for children's literature within publishing companies that had primarily served adults. The popularity of these children's spaces acted as testing grounds for new profit-making ventures for publishers, and also helped them market their works to the adult audiences of parents and teachers. Children's magazines also helped establish a crossover between adult fiction and children's fiction. By 1868, Louisa May Alcott would become editor of the popular children's magazine, *Robert Merry's Museum*, an experience that eventually persuaded her to write for children, an idea she rejected at the start of her editorial career.[43] Famous authors of adult

[41] Ibid., 35-36.
[42] Ibid., 38.
[43] Ibid., 48.

fiction such as Mark Twain and William Dean Howells set a precedent for other writers to venture into children's writing, and the growing popularity and artistic merit awarded to writers appearing in this children's space inspired adult review outlets such as *Atlantic Monthly* and *The Nation* to create a children's review space within their adult magazines.

Overall, the post-Civil War era was important in its inclusion of children in national vicil and political participation. The type of citizenship advocated by children's literature was changing to reflect involvement in the Civil War. The expectation that children would participate in, or at least be aware of politics in the public sphere was also occurring in libraries and in publishing houses. As young adult literature developed in the twentieth century, it oscillated between a concern with children's public participation in the social development of the national community (as in the Civil War era), and a focus on individual, personal development in the private sphere of youth culture.

The late nineteenth century was also important to the emergence of young adult literature because the educational system began to emerge as the arbiter of literary taste with the formation of the Committee of Ten in 1892. Led by Harvard's president and comprised mostly of presidents from other prestigious universities, the Committee of Ten called for high school students to take English courses for five hours each week to prepare for college entrance exams. As a result of this demand high schools relied heavily on publishers who created textbooks based on college literature courses.[44] This change to high school requirements also meant that teachers had to reimagine their teenage students; previously teachers thought of their students as needing literacy skills

[44] Carol Aulbach, "The Committee of Ten: Ghosts Who Still Haunt Us," *The English Journal* 83, no. 3 (1994): 16.

appropriate for the workforce. The new requirements to meet college entrance standards required them to see all students as college-bound. It also shifted who held power over high school curriculum. In meeting the demands of universities in regards to the teaching of literature, the relationship between colleges, public schools and publishers established a firm line between "literary" texts worthy of study and those texts that were deemed unworthy of the high school and college curriculum. This split was important for American literature at large, but would especially effect the production, marketing and reputation of young adult literature. The Civil War marked a shift in how Americans perceived the distance between younger and older generations that soon became a major focus of American families, educators and psychologists at the turn of the century.

1.2 1900-1950s: The New Teenager and the Birth of YAL

Young adult literary scholars usually consider 1930 as the year young adult literature emerged. During this decade, the Stratemeyer Syndicate, a mass market publishing company for young adults, hit its stride with *The Hardy Boys* and *Nancy Drew* series and the American Library Association created the "Young People's Reading Roundtable" which combined children's and adult books into a best-of list for "young readers."[45] From the 1930s-1950s, young adult literature moved away from a focus on the role of the child in the public and political life of the nation; instead young adult literature focused on individual development of the adolescent within their own teenage communities. This new attention to adolescent citizenship within the adolescent community was a response to several major shifts in American culture: developments in

[45] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 8.

psychology, the rising teenage population, and the growth of educational, library and governmental institutions.

After the Civil War, youthful rebellion continued to occupy the American imagination, but it shifted from its application to a large group, such as an entire generation or the Southern separatists, to a stage of life that applied to each individual's development. Youth and adolescence became more strictly delineated with research in psychology and child development during the early twentieth century. In 1904, G. Stanley Hall published *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime and Religion*, in which he coined the term "adolescent" and theorized the teenager as awkward, vulnerable and in a state of constant turmoil "that invited, even required, adult intervention and supervision."[46] William James and John Dewey ushered in a new era of educational reform with child development studies[47] and shifted how we think about literature as important to the psychological and biological development of young readers.[48] The further distinction between developmental stages brought on by Hall, Dewey, James and other child developmental psychologists changed educational achievement levels (grade levels, age cutoffs) and teaching approaches, and also resulted in further subdivision within children's publishing.

The new psychological construction of the adolescent become politically important in the period after the first World War, when the number of teenagers began to

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[46] Ibid., 4.

[47] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 101.

[48] James and Dewey's influence can be seen in the most recent arguments for young adult literature in the classroom that consider developments in neuroscience and how the brain works during the act of reading.

rise, and adults were increasingly moving into the work force or the war. Hall's description of adolescence as sturm und drag became a concern as youth fascist movements gained momentum in Europe and teenage school enrollment increased in the United States from 11.4% in 1910 to 50% by 1930.[49] Struggles emerged for power over how to use literature to help adolescents develop psychologically and morally. In education, the new developments in child psychology led to reforms in thinking about grade-levels and age appropriate curriculum. However, public school teachers were also trying to balance the influx of immigrants and the rising teenage population with extended English study hours advocated by the Committee of Ten. The change to high school curriculum met with resistance from both the public and high school teachers who felt that the new requirements were not democratic in consideration of new immigrant students and the majority of students who were not college bound.[50] By 1911, teachers protesting the new high school English requirements had formed the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and High school English teachers both created a space to claim power over literature and linguistic English with the publication of *English Journal.* The influence of Hall's work on educators resulted in the advocation for education that could lead to the personal development of *all* students.[51] Educators also became forerunners for youth programs concerned with the individual development of young people as relevant contributors to the nation.

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[49] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 5.
[50] Aulbach, "The Committee of Ten: Ghosts Who Still Haunt Us," 16.
[51] Ibid., 17.

Educators and institutions encouraged young people to develop personal reading habits as a means of bringing together personal development and national citizenship. By 1919, the Boy Scouts of America, librarians, and even the president himself had voiced interest in bringing more children's books into the home. Boy Scouts Librarian, Franklin A. Matthews, motivated by President Wilson's declaration of Boy Scout Week, suggested that literature could be used to help create good citizens and soldiers.[52] His recommendations helped conceptualize the first Children's Book Week. The creation of Children's Book Week shows the interconnected motivations and institutional forces that have shaped children's literature throughout the twentieth century. The team behind the event consisted of the influential children's librarian, Carol Anne Moore; the up-and-coming children's editor at Houghton Mifflin, Louise Seaman; and Frederic G. Melcher, coeditor of *Publishers' Weekly*. These librarians, publishers and a major reviewing magazine together represented the producers, distributors and arbiters of reading taste, as they controlled the promotion of children's books in an attempt to make children's reading an everyday activity. The goal was to raise the level of literacy, but also to influence the psychological and moral development of each individual child.

The moral development of each individual child was seen as necessary to train people to contribute to the nation, especially as the economic participation of young adults became important during the Great Depression. A case in point is the creation of the National Youth Administration (1935-1939), which was designed to pull teenagers into the economic recovery of the nation. Targeting 16-25 year olds, the program offered

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[52] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 74-76.

work-study programs that simultaneously encouraged teenagers to pursue education, participate in the workforce and contribute to their own economic advancement. The program also prevented young people from flooding the labor market and kept them in an educational system that touted the freedom and equality available in a democracy.[53] The creation of Children's Book Week and the work of the National Youth Administration aimed to improve the nation as a whole, but promoted their initiatives as important for the social and psychological development of the individual.

The concern that adults should be "training our young people for intelligent participation in the democratic process and providing the means for their absorption into the functioning of our economy" was a concern that went beyond Aubrey Williams, the Director of the National Youth Administration, and made its way into the production and promotion of children's and young adult literature.[54] In 1933, May Masse, celebrated director and editor of junior books divisions at a variety of major publishing houses, wanted children's books to "reflect the best influences from all the people who make this country what it is…[to] make young Americans think and feel more vividly, make them more aware of the world around them and more at home in the world within, more able to give something to their generation and thoroughly to enjoy the giving."[55] Like the creators of the National Youth Administration, Masse was interested in the opportunity for diverse populations in the United States to be incorporated into the pages of American

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[53] Victoria Grieve, "The Visual Production of Citizenship: Children's Literature of the Works Progress Administration, 1937-1942," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (2013): 28.

[54] Aubrey Williams, "Conservation of American Youth by the National Youth Administration," *The Phi Delta Kappan* 21, no. 8 (1939): 379.

[55] qtd. in Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 126.

culture, and to encourage youth to contribute to the health of a larger community. For Masse, as for the NYA, which would go on to support children's book authors, the 1930s was a time in which literature was a means of engaging young people on a personal level with democracy.

While the teenager's economic independence emerged as a source of worry for the NYA, it became a new source of profit for the publishing industry, especially after World War II. By the 1940s, market surveys across all industries began to view teenagers as a profitable demographic. In 1949 the head of Youth Marketing Company, Eugene Gilbert identified teenagers as "a separate and distinct group in our society" and one deserving of marketing attention.[56] Gilbert's definition of teenagers as a "distinct group" of people combines personal desire with the ability to indulge individuality through spending money. This independence would be echoed in *The New York Times* publication of the Teen-Age "Bill of Rights," which mirrored the rights allocated to all citizens within early American legal documentation, subtly reinforcing the idea of citizenship as a guarantee of the individual's rights. Teens were seen as a declared, protected group of citizens.

The new economic power of the teenage consumer demographic prompted a new category of publishing and the development of YAL as a genre separate from children's literature. While the publishing industry had slowly been moving into the "juvenile" realm for three decades, in 1933, Longmans Greens published the first book in their "junior" series aimed at adolescents.[57] This official move into YAL publishing followed a

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[56] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 13.
[57] Ibid., 9.

twenty year development of the Stratemeyer Syndicate, which had established the market for young adults with the popularity of *The Hardy Boys* and *Nancy Drew* as well as a slew of other mass market series. The independence of adolescent consumers developed in opposition to the focus on adolescents as civil and economic participants advocated by librarians, educator and other institutions. It was based on reader tastes rather than the regulation of adults. To the chagrin of librarians, a 1926 survey conducted across thirty-four cities by the American Library Association showed that 98% of children listed Stratemeyer books as their favorites.[58] The success of the Stratemeyer Syndicate proved that young adults could support a book market of their own, and by the 1940s young adult literature became its own publishing category.

As young adult literature developed, the genre continued to divide along gendered lines in order to maximize profit. Unlike the gendered political participation encouraged in the Civil War era, the bildungsroman of the 1930s-50s limited coming-of-age to the individual's relationships to family, peers, and the self. Despite U.S. Involvement in two World Wars, these novels were set almost completely within teenage worlds, and portrayed a link between the individual's social participation in a community and teen spending. These themes are evident in two standout, but very different novels of this period, Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer* (1942) and J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* (1951). Both authors published the novels as adult literature, but their popularity among teenagers made them foundational bestsellers in the young adult market.

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[58] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 105.

Seventeenth Summer, often considered the first young adult novel, follows the development of Angela as she grows into womanhood through her first experience of love. Angie is aware that she does not come into existence for her peers until she begins dating a popular boy, Jack Duluth. Adolescent membership in her community is dependent upon this act, and the benefits of dating bring value to Angie's life. From her new social position she is able to see how the popular boys "watch to see who is having a coke with whom and to report any violations on the part of the girls who are supposed to be going steady. It's almost like a secret police system—no one escapes being checked on. At least no one who counts."[59] Yet Angie is not critical of this system, merely observant. She feels privileged to be policed by these "checkers." The novel's focus on Angie's successes and mistakes in the dating world are centered on teen spending in popular hangout spots. Teens form relationships through buying cokes at the drug store, going on dates, and buying dresses. The cultural practice of regulating the sexuality of girls is tied to the economic independence of teenagers, both of which are necessary for inclusion within teen society.

Like Angie, Holden Caulfield of *The Catcher in the Rye* acknowledges that adolescents have regulatory systems in place to determine who is an adolescent and who is a child. When a teacher tells him that he has to learn to play the game of life, he scoffs, "Game my ass. Some game. If you get on the side where all the hot-shots are, then it's a game, all-right—I'll admit that. But if you get on the other side, where there aren't any hot-shots, then what's a game about it?"[60] While Angie fully conforms to normative

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[59] Maureen Daly, *Seventeenth Summer* (New York,: Dodd, Mead, 1942), 79-80.

[60] J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1991), 8.

behavior and Holden rejects it, both narrators validate the "game" in place that casts adolescents into the world of the "hot-shots" and "checkers," or into the nothingness of children and outcasts. It is also important to note that both novels take place in adolescent worlds—the hangout, the drugstore, the boarding school. While Huck Finn and the March children recognized the existence of slavery and the Civil War, Holden and Angie are oblivious to any world outside of their own, even the small social worlds of their parents. Neither Angie nor Holden are concerned with political situations happening in the United States at large. And it is this version of coming-of-age that dominated the paperback series and fast-selling young adult literature of the 1940s into the 1950s, especially in the most popular fiction genres of romance and hot rod adventures.

1.3 1960s-1970s: A Return to Realism and Political Participation

Following the Civil Rights Era, young adult literature became more socially conscious in the 1960s-70s and engaged with the experiences of young adults by directly portraying and discussing larger social issues in the United States. This resulted in two unique developments in YAL: multicultural literature and the "problem novel.[61] The push for more representation of minority groups occurred within children's and adult literary fiction, but the problem novel was entirely a creation of the young adult publishing industry. These two streams of literature were a result of the increasing institutionalization of young adult literature at a time when educational, publishing and government institutions were responding to Civil Rights movements.

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[61] Michael O. Tunnell and James S. Jacobs, "The Origins and History of American Children's Literature," *Reading Teacher* 67, no. 2 (2013): 83.

By the 1950s, young adult literature had been firmly established as a division within the publishing industry, and was beginning to gain institutional validation in libraries and academia. In 1951, Dwight L. Burton became the first scholar to publish on the literary merit of young adult fiction in his article, "The Novel for the Adolescent." He argued that young adult novels can have literary value, and that the criteria for "good" adolescent novels are the same as the criteria for adult fiction.[62] Burton's work was followed by Richard Alm's article, "The Development of Literature for Young Adults" (1956), and Emma Patterson's article, "The Junior Novels and How They Grew" (1956), both of which continued the argument for the literary value of young adult fiction. In the twenty-first century, academics continue to pursue these arguments to establish the genre's cultural capital.[63] The Young Adult Library Services Association was established in 1957, marking the official arrival of YAL in the foundational fields of education, libraries and publishing. The increasing value of young adult literature made it an important location for representing the changing political climate.

As young adult literature was becoming more institutionalized, the institutions of education, libraries and publishing were about to be changed by major political events. In 1954, the decision in Brown v. Board of Education decision legally ended racial segregation and the United States entered a period where under-represented minority groups fought to expand the Civil Rights of women (and) people of color. Central to these civil rights movements was a focus on raising children to live ethically in a diverse

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[62] Dwight L. Burton, "The Novel for the Adolescent," *The English Journal* 40, no. 7 (1951): 369.

[63] Most recently, *The Critical Merits of Young Adult Literature: Coming of Age* (2014), edited by Crag Hill, attempts to "define theoretical lenses, often built from traditional literary theory, refined with the concerns, issues and challenges of the adolescent in mind" in order to create a critical approach to YAL that places it alongside other literary forms in academic study (x).

United States and many of these groups believed that literature could prepare children for life in a more equitable world. Following the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Immigration Act of 1965, teachers, librarians and the government, had to adjust to the changing demographics of American schools and racial integration in public spaces. To this end, the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act allocated money to schools serving low-income and minority children, thus stimulating publishers to meet these needs.[64]

As new government funding was poured into schools, commercial publishing was slow to meet the demand for more diverse literature, and a new publishing system emerged to meet the demands of educators, librarians and parents. Dissatisfied with stereotyped representations of women and under-represented minorities, counterculture movements began to create their own bookstores and small press publishing ventures. Out of the women's movements came activist presses such as the Feminist Press and Kitchen Table Press, both interested in varying the representations of girls within children's literature. Quinto Sol and Cinco Puntos arose out of the Chicano and Latino movements.[65]

Small presses found sustainability in the lucrative educational market. As activists pushed for revision of university policies and the development of ethnic and women's studies departments, educators needed to meet evolving curriculum demands. Small activist presses tended to expand their children's lists and adult lists, ignoring the young

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[64] Katharine Capshaw, "Ethnic Studies and Children's Literature: A Conversation between Fields," *The Lion and the Unicorn* 38, no. 3 (2014): 240.

[65] The new publishing system created by Civil Rights activist presses will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

adult category altogether; however, many of these small presses published bildungsromans as a means of addressing the experiences of people of color within American culture. Adolescents read many of the award-winning publications from these small presses during the rise of multicultural education in the 1980s. Such works as *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya, *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison, and the Feminist Press re-print of "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman were originally published by small activist presses and have now been added to the American literary canon. Support for these presses came from small, independently-owned bookstores popping up around the country as commercial publishing did little to improve the representation of diverse characters and writers.

Parents, teachers, and small press ventures were not the only ones focusing on expanding multicultural literature. Librarians also pushed for diversity in children's and young adult literature. In the 1930s, Pura Belpré became the first Puerto Rican children's librarian for the New York Public Library and worked as a storyteller to bring culturally relevant storytelling to the Latino community. In 1961, Augusta Baker became the first African American coordinator of Children's Services for the New York Public Library. She had been working to create collections of children's books that represented African American children since 1939, and as the Civil Rights movement gained momentum and Baker gained influence, she publicly encouraged award list judges and publishers to seek out work written by African American authors.[66] As both children and parents came into libraries seeking books to help young people deal with events unfolding around civil

[66] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 224.

rights, librarians chose to acknowledge children's needs for reading materials to address the current cultural moment. The Children's Book fair in 1969 reflected the link between youth and revolutionary movements with the selection of its theme "Book Power," a nod to the motto "Black Power." The campaign's advertisements featured gender-ambigous children as leaders of demonstrations and situated literature as a helpful tool for gaining both power and the ability to understand the complex world into which young people were playing an important social and political role.[67]

While educators and teachers were pushing for minority books, commercial publishers began thinking about a much easier way to capitalize on school funding for books—changing the publication format. Meeting the multicultural market needs would have required building new relationships with diverse authors, illustrators, and shifting the power dynamics within publishing institutions themselves. Instead, it was much easier for the industry to consider shifting from a hardcover market to mass market paperback publishing. This led to the introduction of the "problem novel," a genre that shifted the bildungsroman away from the coming-of-age tale as a story of individual development and towards understanding one's place in relation to social and political conditions. The problem novel could be produced cheaply in paperback format and meet the need for politically and socially relevant reading material without changing the structure of publishing.

[67] Ibid., 248.

The problem novel is associated with S.E. Hinton, a sixteen year-old who wanted to see the real troubles of teenagers reflected in young adult literature.[68] In 1967, she published her breakout novel, *The Outsiders*, creating a new version of the American bildungsroman, one in which the narrator must learn to be an adult through dealing with class violence. The primary tension in the novel is the class conflict between the Socs (short for socials, slang for rich kids) and the Greasers (kids front the poor side of town). The rumbles seem natural to these gangs until a fight leads to murder and individuals must reconsider their own participation in escalating the violence. Randy, a Soc, explains his refusal to fight to a greaser: "You can't win, even if you whip us. You'll still be where you were before—at the bottom. And we'll still be the lucky ones with all the breaks. So it doesn't do any good, the fighting and the killing. It doesn't prove a thing…Greasers will still be greasers and Socs will still be Socs."[69] In this moment, Randy comes-of-age by refusing the unconscious behavior that characterized his childhood and thinking analytically about the violence that plagues his teenage life.

The Outsiders was a watershed text not only because it portrayed the reality of urban adolescent life, but also because it frankly acknowledged the causes of the social problems that its characters faced.[70] Within the first chapter, narrator Ponyboy immediately explains the social divide between the gangs: "We're poorer than the Socs and the middle class."[71] Yet, as Eric L. Tribunella argues, *The Outsiders* is no radical

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[68] Eric L. Tribunella, "Institutionalizing "the Outsiders": Ya Literature, Social Class, and the American Faith in Education," *Children's Literature in Education* 38, no. 2 (2007): 87.

[69] S. E. Hinton, *The Outsiders* (London: Puffin Books, 1997), 117.

[70] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism.*

[71] Hinton, *The Outsiders*, 3.

text; Ponyboy does not challenge the economic and social systems that place greasers in a disadvantaged position, instead Ponyboy writes his narrative as a homework assignment, thus preaching a solution that would please adults; Ponyboy does not become a radical Marxist, but enters back into the educational system as a means of transcending social ills.[72] If, as Tribunella suggests, the Socs and Greasers represent "a clash between conflicting models of youth—on the one hand a nineteenth century and Depression era model of the child as a necessary economic contributor to the household, and on the other hand the new teenager of the mid-twentieth century whose primary job is going to school and spending money on youth culture," then Ponyboy and Hinton represent the teenager of the 1960s.[73] This new youth is able to analyze the social positions of different groups and tries to solve social problems.

The Outsiders served as a model for the plethora of problem novels that would emerge throughout the seventies in its frankness about social conditions, its analytically-minded characters, easy solution and popular success. In Nat Hentoff's novel, *I'm really dragged but nothing gets me down* (1968), a boy deciding whether to dodge the draft for the Vietnam War openly discusses racism, capitalism and the idea that "there'll always be another [war] for us…If you're born into the most powerful country in the world, you're screwed."[74] And Judy Blume's *Are You There God, It's Me, Margaret* (1970) breaks a taboo by openly discussing menstruation as a positive experience. The anonymously published *Go Ask Alice* (1971) and *A Hero Ain't Nothing but a Sandwich* (1973), by

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[72] Ibid.

[73] Tribunella, "Institutionalizing "the Outsiders": Ya Literature, Social Class, and the American Faith in Education," 89.

[74] Nat Hentoff, *I'm Really Dragged but Nothing Gets Me Down* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968), 8.

Alice Childress,[75] popularized the theme of drug addiction in the problem novel.[76] For both the young adult genre and young adult characters, coming-of-age in the sixties and seventies meant becoming a citizen able to cope with both personal and political problems. By the middle of the 1960s, experiments in paperback publishing, coupled with the emergence of the problem novel, proved to be a viable venture for YAL publishers.[77] When Title 2 funding was withdrawn during Nixon's administration in 1969,[78] the problem novel was already popular enough outside of the educational market to keep YAL publishers afloat.

The problem novel was also unique in that it allowed for more crossover in gendered readerships. For example, both boys and girls were the protagonists of drug addiction novels. But many of the problem novels still maintained gender divides when addressing girls' problems (rape, teen pregnancy, abortion, menstruation) and boys' problems (war, gang and other forms of violence). The problem novel was only the beginning of a shift away from divisions based on portraying ideal gendered adolescent behavior. With this trend toward new realism came some limitations. The problem novel has been considered a genre of "new didacticism" because it is "hard to write a novel about a problem or problems without being tempted to offer solutions."[79] These topic-driven novels often relied on contrived happy endings that lacked the stylistic and

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[75] *A Hero Ain't Nothing but a Sandwich* was one of the few problem novels set in an African AMerican community. The genre was mostly dominated by white writers and characters.

[76] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 30.

[77] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 241.

[78] Ibid., 245.

[79] Tribunella, "Institutionalizing "the Outsiders": Ya Literature, Social Class, and the American Faith in Education," 89.

character complexity deemed appropriate for teenage readers.[80] But these criticisms came from adults, not the teens rapturously consuming these novels. Young people were purchasing these books at a steady rate,[81] and in 2001, *Publisher's Weekly* listed *The Outsiders* as the second best-selling children's book.[82] Despite dwindling school funding during the 1970s, it could not have hurt the YAL industry that by 1973, the NCTE had created the Assembly for Literature on Adolescents (ALAN) to promote the use of YAL in middle and high school classrooms.[83]

The connection between the development of minority literature and the problem novel illustrates an overall need for American culture to acknowledge the reality of teenage life. For young women (and) people of color in the United States during the sixties and seventies, the lack of visibility in American literature meant an erasure of their lives that paralleled the erasure of political, social and economic equality in the adult world. To create change, the first step was representation in the American narrative. Within commercialized young adult literature, the turn toward new realism meant recognizing how adult problems permeated the world of young adults, a direct contrast to the commercial young adult literature represented in the series and genre fiction that had dominated the 1940s and 1950s.[84] While the two strands of developing literature generally remained divided by racial representation and authorship, both the developing

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[80] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 32-33.

[81] Ibid., 33.

[82] Tribunella, "Institutionalizing "the Outsiders": Ya Literature, Social Class, and the American Faith in Education," 87.

[83] Carl M. Tomlinson, *Essentials of Young Adult Literature*, ed. Carol Lynch-Brown (Boston: Boston : Pearson/Allyn and Bacon, 2007), 7.

[84] Tribunella, "Institutionalizing "the Outsiders": Ya Literature, Social Class, and the American Faith in Education." 89

multicultural literature and the emerging "problem" novel were committed to portraying young adults as participants in the realms of law and liberty, rights in the political process who deserved representation in the cultural heritage of the United States.

1.4 1980s-1990s: Horror, Romance and a Return to Early YAL Publishing

Young adult literature scholars typically view the 1980s as as a response to the "conservatively nostalgic climate" of the 1980s because the genre returned to the "romance" literature and publishing strategies of the 1940s after an overload of realism in the 1960s-1970s. [85] However, these decades can also be characterized by a split between multicultural literature and mass market paperback YAL. The development of multicultural literature and the YAL mass market paperback bestsellers parallels the philosophies of the two camps locked in debate over the very public "culture wars" over multicultural literature. Both types of literature developed in response to a "white backlash" against the gains of the Civil Rights movements, and was aided by changes in the relationship between publishing and the education and library book markets.

The American culture wars of the 1980s led to two different criticisms of multiculturalism that influenced the production of multicultural literature and its use as a pedagogical tool. The canon wars were waged by proponents of the educational movement and Conservative politicians and media that conceptualized the decade as "post racist," and the "official doctrine of these attacks was not white supremacy, however, but color blindness" achieved through "restricting the relevance of race." In the late eighties and into the 1990s, critics emerged who saw multiculturalism not as an

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[85] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 37.

analytical tool to understand race relations in the United States, but as "a shift away from antiracism and power" and towards an "approach to literature that has to do with management and containment." This containment occurs when diversity is reduced to surface understandings of cultures (facts about food, fashion, cultural norms, etc.) without the histories of oppression and struggles for power that occur within the United States. As a result of the post-racial viewpoint emerging in the eighties, the number of children's books by and about people of color decreased by fifty percent during the late 1970s-early1980s, a steep decline that would reverse by the 1990s.

Although children's multicultural book publishing declined during this period, multicultural education was impacting the structure of universities with the creation of new curriculum and Ethnic Studies departments. Multicultural publishing projects were dependent upon the tastes of emerging ethnic studies departments. As with the Committee of Ten in the late nineteenth century, these new programs determined which literature became valuable, and secondary school teachers adopted texts from the college curriculum for high school use.

As scholars regulated their disciplines, their choices in texts also regulated how we have come to view multicultural literature. Katherine Capshaw argues in "Ethnic Studies and Children's Literature: A Conversation Between Two Fields," that as ethnic studies departments crystallized, their position within the university became "a site of 'minority reconciliation,' a place of trade-offs: material change traded in for incorporation and inclusion. Diversity in the academy stood in for material revolution."[86]

[86] Capshaw, "Ethnic Studies and Children's Literature: A Conversation between Fields," 241.

U.S. Ethnic literature scholars dedicated their careers to including diverse voices in the American literary canon. Since the eighties, ethnic studies scholars have defined this approach to literature according to three characteristics: first, ethnic literature becomes representative of minority groups through the ethnic authenticity of the author; second, ethnic literature takes race as the central struggle of the text, which culminates in the successful incorporation of characters into the American Dream; and finally texts "enter a commodified institutional system, whereby its value was located in its usefulness for training students into [culturally aware] citizens."[87]

As this approach to literature became the norm within multicultural education at the university level, the bildungsromans that came to typify this emerging literature. Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Sandra Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street,* and several others passed from university curriculum into high school classrooms. Many of these works were originally published or reprinted through small multicultural presses for adult audiences, but through educational canonization have become associated with young adult readers.[88] Essentially, the multicultural bildungsroman widely read by adolescents were adult texts adopted for multicultural curriculum. Multicultural coming-of-age stories were less frequently accessible to young readers as commercial YAL texts.[89]

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[87] Ibid., 242.

[88] The small activist publishing system for multicultural literature will be discussed in depth in Chapter Two.

[89] Several now canonical books came from the 1970s, such as *M.C. Higgins the Great* and *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. And Latin@ and Asian American YAL would develop rapidly in the 1990s. Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*.

While the very public debate about multicultural education was going on, the book selling industry was moving YAL in a different direction by shifting the buying power directly to young adults through paperback book clubs and introducing chain bookstores into malls. The invention of paperback school book clubs was one of the most successful marketing tools of commercial publishing industry in this era. These clubs distributed book lists to students and their parents via classrooms, combining the pedagogical purpose of teachers with the economic purposes of large-scale publishing. By the 1990s, book clubs/publishers like Scholastic, Trumpet Club and Weekly Reader had turned this strategy into sales in the hundreds of millions of dollars. This marketing strategy, along with changes to bookseller locations and a conservative ideological atmosphere made possible the other major shift in YAL during the eighties: the return to romance paperbacks and syndicate publishing.

Paperback book clubs taught the publishing industry that the paperback market could successfully sustain YAL when marketed directly to teenagers, but it was the mall bookstores that ultimately cut adults out of the relationship between publishers and readers. Teens of the 1980s increasingly had increased access to their own money, and chain bookstores allowed teenagers more freedom to select books without adult intervention.[90] New bookstores like B.Dalton operated in a mode of anonymity where employees were not expected to recommend books or to comment on adolescent reading choices.[91] Providing teens more freedom of access worked well for infotainment

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[90] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 290.

[91] Amy Pattee, *Reading the Adolescent Romance : Sweet Valley High and the Popular Young Adult Romance Novel* (New York: New York : Routledge, 2011), 15-19.

conglomerates that were buying large publishing houses and merging them with entertainment corporations such as the purchase of Simon & Schuster (books) by Paramount (film), which was ultimately bought by Viacom (CBS Corporation).[92] Marketing to teens in malls was a smart business strategy for these companies. They could package books with toys, films and other cross-promotional products and sell a variety of products in one location. Declines in school and library funding, coupled with increased access to independent teenage book buying enabled the publishing industry toward publishing cheap paperback series to remain stable.[93]

The return to paperback publishing was not only a throwback to the marketing and economic publishing strategies of the forties and fifties, but was an ideological return to viewing young adult social participation as limited to their teenage worlds. Once again, there was a growing concern over teenagers and their inner worlds, but this time the move towards politically inactive young adult fiction was a part of a backlash against too much reality—both in the post-Civil rights conservative climate, and in the realist fiction of the 1970s. Like popular YAL of the forties, YAL in the eighties took place almost entirely in the teen worlds of home, school and popular hangouts, including the very malls where publishers hoped to sell books. There was also a return to the romance—gendered novels in which happy endings dominated-- especially in the new romance and horror genres.

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[92] Tunnell and Jacobs, "The Origins and History of American Children's Literature," 85.

[93] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 290-91.

The new features of the romance, and the completely new YAL horror genre reflected a "white backlash" against multiculturalism and a rejection of YAL as a pedagogical tool. The *Sweet Valley High* series, one of the most popular series to come out of the mass market paperback industry in the eighties, serves as an example of how YAL for girls was influenced by the infotainment conglomerates and the American political climate of the eighties. As YAL publishers entered into an unstable period due to the transition from a school market to a retail market, they turned to the romance genre, one of their most profitable business models to help sustain sales.[94] In 1983, Francine Pascal pitched her first Sweet Valley High book, and suggested that teen romances be marketed differently than those for adults. Pascal's strategy advocated less dependence on imprint loyalty, and focused instead on recurring characters across novels.[95] The books also featured cliffhanger endings and shifted from self-contained individual books to progressive books that could be read independently, but had a larger narrative arc when read in succession. Other than these slight innovations, *Sweet Valley High* borrowed its writing and marketing from mid-century teen romances and syndicate publishing.[96] As with the Stratemeyer Syndicate's series, *Sweet Valley High* was ghostwritten by authors using Pascal's pen name, and the formulaic plots were dictated by tip sheets used to maintain consistency across writers. The successful renovation of the teen romance genre in *Sweet Valley High* resulted in a renewed interest in the buying power of teenagers. In 1985, one of the series' books, *The Perfect Summer*, was the first

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[94] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 39.

[95] Pattee, *Reading the Adolescent Romance : Sweet Valley High and the Popular Young Adult Romance Novel*, 21.

[96] Ibid., 17.

YAL title to appear on *The New York Times* bestselling paperback list.[97] By the end of the 1980s, Bantam publishing had over 34 million *Sweet Valley High* books in print, and the series had middle school and college-age spinoffs as well.[98]

This renaissance of the teen romance paperback rose, as it did in the forties, at a time when adults in the United States were concerned both with the growing independence of a teenage population, but it also occurred at a time of a conservative backlash against the changes wrought by the Civil Rights era. As part of this backlash, a political, media driven stance emerged that claimed the 1960s had robbed children of a childhood. This lost childhood could be reclaimed through a return to American values and an idealized post-WWII era. Scholar Amy Pattee argues in her book-length study of *Sweet Valley* that the series "reflects what was, at the time of the series' initial publication, a politically conservative ideology ascending in the 'real world' outside of the text…[and] reflects a moral panic occurring outside of the series text."[99] *Sweet Valley* reinforced the conservative political strategies of silence on larger national issues. Francine Pascal, the creator of the series seems to reinforce the "colorblindness" of conservative arguments against multicultural education. In discussing the suburban, almost completely white world of *Sweet Valley High*, in which most of the teenagers come from middle and upper class households, Pascal described the series as "a microcosm of the real world."[100] Pascal's casual reference to her novel as a reflection of

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[97] Ibid., 1.

[98] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 39.

[99] Pattee, *Reading the Adolescent Romance : Sweet Valley High and the Popular Young Adult Romance Novel*, 28.

[100] qtd. inibid., 170.

reality constructs a single view of the world that completely erases people of color from an idealized setting of American life. In the world of Sweet Valley, teenage space is independent from the adult world, but this fantasy space has not changed much in the last fifty years; as in the forties, teen life was seen as insulated from the adult world, plots took place at school in the home (particularly the feminine domain of the kitchen), and in local teen hang-outs.[101] The romantic nostalgia of the books ultimately erases the adult-world problems of Civil Rights and other political concerns of the previous two decades. This casual erasure was also a feature of the canon wars that insisted that the American literary canon should not be changed to incorporate minority experiences—the old classics were good enough to represent all Americans, and whiteness was the foundational norm.

The return to mass market publishing not only revived an old YAL genre, it also created a new one. While the romance genre focused exclusively on girls, a new genre of teen horror was emerging and was finding success with adolescent boys. Author R.L. Stine claimed that his books were the first to attract "equal numbers of boys and girls" in this age group, but also claims that "We got boys to read. That's the difference" in the success of his series.[102] Following the success of horror films in the late seventies and early eighties, Christopher Pike published the first teen thriller, *Slumber Party* in 1985, and R.L. Stine, who would dominate the genre into the 1990s, followed with *Blind Date*

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[101] Ibid., 4.

[102] Patrick Jones, "Nothing to Fear: R. L. Stine and Young Adult Paperback Thrillers," *Collection Management* 25, no. 4 (2001): 6).

in 1987.[103] The success of this venture inspired Stine's *Goosebumps* and *Fear Street* series, and by 1994 each title under *Goosebumps* had sold over a million copies.[104]

Like *Sweet Valley* books, the horror stories conceptualized teen life as separate from the social ills of the adult world. Adult institutional forces like police officers and doctors appeared only to assure readers that the criminally insane perpetrators of horror would be sent away to asylums or jails, thus leaving teenage characters free from anxiety about future horrors. In fact, the horror world was so confined to the teenage world that even the violence came from within. Library consultant Patrick Jones described the world of R.L. Stine novels:

> Most center on a group of well-scrubbed suburban kids with the normal set of fears. The fears are not about monsters, but about grades, being liked, and fitting in. Most of the characters in the books are white, live in the suburbs, and hang out in malls, and they will do incredibly stupid things...except one, the villain, who is a dysfunctional member of the teen peer group.[105]

Just as romance novels like *Sweet Valley High* had gone for romance without sex, teen thrillers went for fear without the dead bodies; both genres offered "safe" experiences without moving into content that would be considered too adult, and in doing so satisfied adult concerns that YAL had been too realistic in the problem novel era. Thrillers included death, but never for main characters, and never described in detail. The killers

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[103] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 40.
[104] Ibid., 40-41.
[105] Jones, "Nothing to Fear: R. L. Stine and Young Adult Paperback Thrillers," 9.

were almost always caught, and the end of each book left the teenage world without threat.[106] Although violence occurred, these novels contrasted sharply with the problem novels of the seventies.

Reactions to the emerging horror genre also mirrored reactions to the new romances. They became bestsellers among young readers, and librarians opposed them on the grounds of literary value and adult themes. Stine's reaction to the criticism was to further separate his books from the world of the literary with his claim that "kids as well as adults are entitled to books of no socially redeeming value."[107] Stine clearly set himself against the pedagogical goal of YAL, stating that, "If you want to be taken seriously as a children's book writer, the rule in all children's books is that characters have to learn and to grow...I'm really proud that mine don't. They don't learn anything. They are too busy running."[108]

Stine clearly rejects the notion that he must appeal to an adult audience that regulates YAL through pedagogical value. Stine's comments can also be seen as representative of the new teenage citizen embraced by publishers and bookstore chains in the eighties. Teens were now completely autonomous consumers who were concerned with entertainment now that they had been freed of the burden of reading for education. This was echoed by a 1986 Forbes magazine article that claimed that teenagers of the eighties "have seen the future—they want to buy it, not change it."[109] This version of the teenager imagined by the economic forces influencing YAL was very different from the

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[106] Ibid., 10. Jones

[107] qtd. inibid., 5.

[108] Ibid., 19.

[109] qtd. InCart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 40.

young person imagined by both sides in the canon wars: highly malleable vessels to be filled by either "classic" literature and/or "multicultural" literature. The tension between multicultural YAL and genre fiction reflected a tension between the desire to educate teenagers for social and political participation and the desire to incorporate teenage economic participation in a rapidly expanding entertainment market, both of which led to conformity in the stories that were produced.

1.5 1990s-Present: Breaking Age and Gender Boundaries in YAL

Since the 1990s, two subgenres directed the development of young adult literature. The "bleak book" arose out of a disastrous focus on middle school readers while "crossover" and "new adult" novels have allowed the publishing industry to expand the audience of YAL. Because age and gender boundaries define how people participate in their communities, the concerns about the border between adulthood and childhood are also concerns about the responsibility of becoming a citizen-subject. How early should this responsibility begin? How much participation in adult social worlds is appropriate for adolescents? The YAL industry addressed these questions in opposing ways through a focus on younger readers and the development of bleak books.

The two major YAL movements of the period represent both the failure and successes possible when new media conglomerates restructured publishing by narrowing their publishing focus and marketing strategies. The rise of these conglomerates meant that CEOs of publishing companies had little experience with the publishing industry.[110] As a result of this new management, decision-making in commercial publishing moved

[110] Ibid., 61.

from editorial staff to marketing executives as the conglomerates tried to compete in the book, film and finance industries.[111] Thus the publishing industry in two important ways: first, a star system emerged in which writers catapulted to large-scale fame and inspired a rash of imitation. Secondly, companies began to focus their promotion on a smaller number of texts to maximize profits rather than diversifying their efforts across books and authors. The result was a narrowing of scope in literary production and the increasing commodification of literature.[112]

Young adult literature in particular was susceptible to this narrowing of production because of the retail and education markets. Though the YAL market continued shifting from education toward retail, both markets began to favor less risqué literature for a younger audience. As funding continued to decrease in the early nineties, schools and libraries that had previously fought for variety in collections were forced to narrow their booklists. By 1993, the educational market dropped from 80-90% to 50-60%.[113] At the same time, the number of middle schools for grades 6-8 increased rapidly from the mid-sixties to the early nineties.[114] This younger pre-teen demographic meant that publishers, teachers and parents were concerned with grade-level appropriate content. The decline in funding and an expanding middle school demographic resulted in a more restricted view of book purchasing in education.

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[111] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 308.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 51.

[114] Ibid., 52.

Whether in response to changes in educational spending or the rise of middle-school age spenders, chain bookstores also limited their book buying choices to content they deemed appropriate for a younger age group.[115] As in the eighties, chain bookstores dominated the adolescent reading market and continued to grow exponentially. Between 1989 and 1992 Barnes and Noble opened over one hundred bookstores in the United States, and by 1997 had expanded to over one thousand locations.[116] Because these large chain bookstores employed book buyers who selected texts for all stores, smaller numbers of people controlled which books were placed on retail shelves. By 1990 it was common knowledge in the book industry that these chains would not stock YAL novels "with anything difficult in it," often excluding texts that alluded to controversial issues in their titles.[117]

The strategy of focusing on a single large market (middle school readers) and promoting a handful of big sellers was a risky move for big business publishing; it paid off if publishers hit the right market with the right books. However, focusing on the middle school market created a form of censorship that almost destroyed young adult literature. The desire of book buyers to restore a perceived innocence to YAL clashed with the findings of market research. Publishers responded by producing literature about younger adolescents (12-14 years old instead of 15-17 years old) in what YAL historian Michael Cart calls the "youthening" of YAL.[118] Yet marketers, described the same

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[115] Spending in this age group increased by 300% during the 1990s. Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 312.

[116] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 61.

[117] Ibid., 52.

[118] Ibid.

demographic group of "tween" 8-12 year olds as having "not yet reached the teen years but aspir[ing] to teenage sophistication…"[119] The developing concept of the tween contradicted the book production and buying decisions of publishers, booksellers and educators. In 1994, the American Library Association's annual YALSA conference, five of the major YAL publishers openly declared the death of the genre. David Gale of Simon and Schuster, the only publisher present still publishing for older YAL readers, claimed that he had to avoid sex and violence in his booklists to meet the dwindling demands of conservative librarians and educators.[120] From 1993-1995, critics began condemning the youthening of literature as a soft form of censorship, calling for more freedom for writers to take risks with content and to explore difficult topics that affected the lives of teenagers.[121] As EDGE imprint editor Marc Aronson stated at the 1996 YALSA conference, by limiting themselves to a younger market, publishers had alienated older teen readers and adults who would be interested in reading bildungsroman featuring older teenage protagonists.[122]

YAL was saved from extinction by the emergence of the "bleak book." This new subgenre rose alongside the teenage population and the institutionalization of YAL as a literary form. The term "bleak" described an emerging YAL subgenre that was "edgy and sophisticated," "meatier," and "tougher" in content.[123] Stephen Roxburgh, editor of the

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[119] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 312.

[120] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 54.

[121] Ibid., 58.

[122] Ibid., 59.

[123] Ileneomano Cooper and Stephanie Zvirin, "Publishing on the Edge.(Young Adult Literature)," *Booklist* 94, no. 9 10 (1998).

small, independent publisher Front Street, agreed that YAL readers were getting younger, but insisted that these readers did not need to be protected from adult content because "The age of sophistication in terms of life experience is dropping."[124] Editors and writers favoring bleak books advocated a return to realism based on a belief that younger readers could not escape exposure to the real issues of their cultural moment. This belief was echoed in other pop culture forms. The release of the film, *Kids* (1995) about the spread of HIV through high a high school community shocked adults with its frank portrayal of middle and high school sexuality, but seemed to reinforce the idea that young kids were involved in adult activities and problems. The internet and Reality TV had also become a large part of teenage life, and as Mark Aronson noted, exposure to these new media forms "normalizes everything. Family secrets, sexual orientation. It would be the odd teenager who hasn't heard something about this sort of thing on TV."[125] Writers of bleak books also adhered to this philosophy, using news and current events as inspiration for their writing.[126]

Arguments about the inevitable exposure of young teens and tweens to real adult problems were in some ways a throwback to the problem novel of the 1970s. Both the problem novel and the bleak book acknowledged the complicated lives of teenagers, and spoke to the political and cultural concerns of their time period. When the bleak book emerged in the nineties, teenage suicide, murder and homelessness were rising rapidly.[127] As a result, YAL broke many content boundaries, especially in regards to sexual identity

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[124] qtd. inibid.
[125] qtd. inibid.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 54.

and violence, themes that were becoming more of a cultural focus in the United States. In 1998, the "bleak books" receiving the most buzz discussed madness, serial killing, and rape.[128]

Bleak books brought about a YAL renaissance through commercial success, but were aided by the validation of institutions that award literary merit. Following a population decline dating back to 1975, the teenage population began in rise again in 1992, and by 1995 *The New York Times* reported that tens of billions of dollars were being spent by teens in the new population boom.[129] Teenagers could once again direct the retail market. Adult appreciation of YAL rose during the nineties as well. The mid to late nineties was a period in which institutions created new systems to assign cultural value to YAL texts. In 1995, the American Book Award introduced a Young Readers category. The next year*, Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, the leading academic journal dedicated to scholarly work on children's literature, published its first issue dedicated solely to YAL, thus validating the genre in the academic arena. In the same year, at the NCTE conference, the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents focused on the place of YAL in the classroom canon, both in terms of literary value, and to fill the need of updating booklists with contemporary works.[130] In 1998, when the nineties YAL renaissance was in full swing, *Los Angeles Times*, a major review venue for literature, added a category for young adult novels to its book awards.[131] In the same year, bleak books had become the hot topic of the YALSA conference, evidence of its reach in the

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[128] Cooper and Zvirin, "Publishing on the Edge.(Young Adult Literature)."
[129] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 62.
[130] Ibid., 58.
[131] Ibid., 63.

educational and library markets. And in 2000, the Michael L. Printz award was created in order to honor YAL of high literary merit, comparable to the Caldecott award for children's literature.[132] The Printz award has become the most influential marker of the literary value of YAL texts. All of these awards created a space for adults to recognize YAL as an artistic literary form, thus giving them permission to read books marketed to younger audiences.

The idea that children and teens were becoming mature at earlier ages allowed the bleak book to create a crossover audience of teenagers and adults. A case in point is the 1999 MTV/Pocketbooks publication of Stephen Chboskey's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. Although the protagonist was a high school freshman, the book was a commercial success, proving that crossover novels could successfully sell to an expanded age range of twelve to thirty-four.[133] Like MTV books, other publishers sought to "blur the distinction between adult and children's book markets" with new imprints, such as Macmillan's Young Picador and Harper Collins's Flamingo.[134]

The bleak book and crossover novel reveal both the failure and successes of limiting commercial publishing to a single strategy. Both trends broke down assumptions about the adult/child divide in reading habits. The bleak book proved that children and adults could handle reading the same content; the worldwide success of J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007) also proved that an adult crossover audience was possible. But it also changed young adult publishing by disproving several assumptions

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[132] Ibid., 62.

[133] Michael Cart, "More Notes on New Adults," *Booklist* 110, no. 12 (2014): 68.

[134] Rachel Falconer, "Young Adult Fiction and the Crossover Phenomenon," in *The Routledge Companion to Children's Literature*, ed. David Rudd, Routledge Companions (Routledge, 2010), 17.

about the formal distinctions between YAL and adult literature. Both fields of literature had long believed that children would not read books longer than two hundred pages.[135] In each of the American hardback versions of *Harry Potter*, there are over three hundred pages, and over four thousand pages in the entire series. The decade-long commercial success of Harry Potter assured that adult interest could no longer be denied. Harry Potter was the first title to appear on both children's and adult bestseller lists, and by the release of the final volume the series had sold over 325 million copies.[136]

The success of crossover texts such as *Harry Potter* depend on marketing strategies that clearly interpolate both child and adult audiences through the book's packaging. For example, upon the success of the first *Harry Potter* novel, the novel's British publisher Bloomsbury targeted the British children's and adult markets by producing two versions of the books. They had different covers signaling their age appropriate category, and were sold in two different locations within bookstores. The adult version was released one year after each children's addition. By 2004 the series had become so popular that both editions were released simultaneously.[137] This strategy cleverly avoided one of the main concerns of publishing—how bookstores could shelve books meant for multiple audiences. The second packaging strategy for crossover marketing is to release a single book that appeals to both young adult and older readers. This second strategy has been most frequently adopted as a cover design strategy by American publishers, especially with the iconic covers of the *Twilight* and *Hunger*

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[135] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 314.

[136] Ibid., 16.

[137] Falconer, "Young Adult Fiction and the Crossover Phenomenon," 16.

Games series, in which visual symbols from the book become brands that stretch across multiple mediums and products such as books, films, makeup and toys. Both of these strategies consider the anxieties of public adult reading habits. By releasing two separate versions of a single book, adults can walk into a bookstore without fear of being seen in the children's section. The age-neutral cover allows the adult to read in public without signaling to other adults that the book in hand is YAL.

The crossover marketing strategies used to allow adults to feel comfortable reading children's books reflects a larger cultural anxiety about the blurring of boundaries between adolescence and adulthood. Scholar Rachel Falconer claims that crossover readers reveal "how our attitudes to childhood, adulthood, and the in-between state of adolescence are all shifting, becoming more flexible and porous, as we adapt to changing social conditions in the developed world."[138] Where critics of bleak books were concerned that children were growing up too fast, the success of Harry Potter was used by some, including literary critic Harold Bloom, as evidence that adults were becoming increasingly infantilized.[139] Bloom's claim that the canonization of *Harry Potter* is evidence of the "dumbing down" of adults, and the separation of *Harry Potter* from adult literature is in line with the anxieties over "the decline of republican citizenship" which "claims that citizens were once adults with public civic identities, but that they have, as a result of the increasing privatization of citizenship, become children."[140] The anxiety over adult crossover reading, is perhaps based on the assumption that literature children and

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[138] Ibid., 4.

[139] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 214.

[140] Weikle-Mills, ""Learn to Love Your Book": The Child Reader and Affectionate Citizenship," 37.

young adults encourages the development of the individual in the private sphere to the detriment of communal civic participation in the public sphere. By the third installment of the series, *The New York Times* had received so many complaints about the appearance of Harry Potter on adult bestseller lists that the review venue created a separate juvenile list.[141]

Interestingly, the reaction against *Harry Potter* is about the failure of adults to act against evil in the public sphere for fear of destroying their individual careers and social stability. Despite these anxieties, Rachel Falconer claims that by 2007, "children's literature had 'come of age' and consequently could be legitimately read by adults."[142] This claim is supported by the demographics of book sales as of 2014: 18-44 year olds buy 62% of YAL; 45-64 year olds buy 22%; and the traditional YAL demographic of 13-17 year-olds accounts for only 16% of YAL sales.[143]

Currently, young adult literature is continuing to blur the lines between adulthood and childhood through the new "young adult" subgenre. Michael Cart defines the new adult readers as "post high school young people, aged roughly 19-28, who had yet to leave home.[144] The books targeting this demographic tend to be:

> more often character—rather than simply plot-driven; the setting is often more fully realized; adult characters (i.e., post-28) may play significant parts; and the subject matter, if not more sophisticated, at least receives a more subtle treatment, except, perhaps, for sex, which can be more

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[141] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe,* 313.

[142] Falconer, "Young Adult Fiction and the Crossover Phenomenon," 3.

[143] Cart, "More Notes on New Adults," 68.

[144] "The New Adult; or, What's in a Name?," *Booklist* 110, no. 8 (2013): 36.

> prevalent—and, uh, more specific in some new adult books than in YA. Finally, the changes of ambiguity in new adult are greater in YA…two principal areas of commonality are 1) the age of the protagonist relative to the age of the readership…and 2) the coming-of-age narrative.[145]

Cart's description denies many of the criteria that have defined YAL since it's inception. The "subtle treatment" of the subject matter works against the didacticism typically associated with the pedagogical function of YAL. It also breaks through content lines adults have drawn between young adult literature and adult fiction, which have typically revolved around sex. It might be easy to explain away the emergence of new adult literature by the economic drive of publishers, but as I will suggest in chapter three, there are social implications for publishing in YAL rather than adult literary fiction, especially along the lines of gender.

1.6 Conclusion

As outlined in this chapter, changes within the history of young adult literature have typically occurred alongside shifts in the power dynamics between publishing and educational systems. Educators, parents and teachers see YAL as a pedagogical tool for training American youth to become ideal citizens of the United States as political and social participants in their communities. What counts as political and social participation varies according to the broader cultural context surrounding the production of literature. Publishers meet those cultural needs in order to maximize profit, but have shifted in their alignment with the goals of adults and the desires of young readers, sometimes viewing

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[145] Ibid.

the independent economic participation of young adults as far more profitable than providing the pedagogically driven content desired by adults. The following chapters approach the central tensions of YAL development (pedagogy vs. profit, gendered reading practices, the influence of infotainment conglomerates) in more depth. Chapter Two will examines the tension between pedagogy and profit during a particularly generative moment in publishing, when the multicultural education movement of the 1980s created and sustained an alternative system of publishing that diversified both the material production of literature and the American literary canon.

CHAPTER 2. MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION, AMERICAN PUBLISHING AND THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET

On December 22, 1988 *The Wall Street Journal* dedicated two columns to a critique of Stanford University's global approach to required freshman courses. In a commentary called "The Stanford Mind," the journal laments that the University's "Western Cultures" courses had been replaced by courses in a newly created track entitled "Culture, Ideas and Values." *The Wall Street Journal* portrayed this change as a moment of weakness for the university, which had "caved into political pressures" to promote a dangerous agenda:

> The new course rides the main hobbyhorses of today's political left—race, gender and class. The West is perceived not through the evolution of such ideas as faith and justice, but through the prism of racism and the faults of its ruling classes…The difference is that rather than illuminate the West, the replacement authors mainly attack it.[146]

This stance illuminates the larger debate about multicultural education in the 1980s. First, the anonymous editorial appears in a business journal, far removed from experts in curriculum selection. The article quotes vague fears about stripping education of Western values that have been carefully constructed over long periods of enlightened

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[146] "Review & Outlook (Editorial): The Stanford Mind," *Wall Street Journal*, 1988 Dec 22 1988.

development. From this point of view, multiculturalism adds new, untested materials to fill newly created gaps with "lesser known authors" on a one-to-one basis. For example, the editorial sarcastically remarks that "Martin Luther and Galileo are out, but such timeless notables as Juan Rolfo ("The Burning Plain") and Sandra Cisneros ("The House on Mango Street") are in."[147] Ironically, one of the very texts *The Wall Street Journal* disparages, *The House on Mango Street*, has become an American classic, and serves as an example of how multicultural education not only influenced the classroom, but together with small, independent presses, changed the racial diversity of the American literary canon during the 1980s and 1990s. *The House on Mango Street,* as well as Cisneros's later work, addresses the literary forms and concerns of Latina literature. The book not only speaks to the political and social experiences of Latinas and Latinos in the United States, it also countered the male-dominated Chicano nationalist literature of the 1960s through a protagonist who discovers the intersections of gender, class and racial oppression in her adolescent life. While Cisneros was not the first Latina writing from this space, she was one of the first Latina writers to have her works incorporated into the public school system and widely read beyond academia. A case study of *The House on Mango Street* reveals how the classroom use of American bildungsroman written by non-white authors positively affected the financial viability of small presses, the canonization of authors, and encouraged commercial publishers to meet the demand for multicultural literature.

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[147] Ibid.

2.1 Multicultural Education and the Rise of Independent Presses

Teachers worked to develop multicultural curriculum long before *The Wall Street Journal* voiced its fears. After the Civil Rights movements of the sixties, student and teacher activists placed increasing pressure on libraries and schools to provide curriculum to better reflect the multicultural U.S. population. The National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE), one of the largest organizations for primary and secondary teachers of English in the United States, began moving towards multicultural education in 1966, with Ted Hipple's article, "Through Literature to Freedom," in which he discussed English education as necessary to combat the lingering prejudices of students by instilling "in our students an understanding of the humanness and individuality of all people."[148] By 1970, the NCTE was promoting Black literature courses, and Asian literature in world literature courses. This marked a significant shift away from articles focused on single British, European and early Anglo-American "classic" texts commonly taught in English courses.

English teachers also argued that more diverse literature was necessary for their "culturally different and disadvantaged" students as the demographics of the classroom changed. In 1970, Alfred H. Grommon, the first author to use the term "multicultural" in the NCTE's *English Journal,* called for teachers to revamp their courses to create "opportunities to read writing and speeches by representatives of minority groups in our multicultural society." By 1975, the NCTE announced a resolution to "urge publishers to increase the production of books, films, records, and other study materials which accurately and sensitively depict Mexican American, Asian American, Afro-American,

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[148] Ted Hipple, "Through Literature to Freedom," *The English Journal* 55, no. 2 (1966): 189.

Native American, and other indigenous minority cultures and traditions, for use in elementary schools, secondary schools, and colleges."[149] This resolution specifically put pressure on publishers as necessary to the educational movement. Small, independent publishers aligned with teachers in these concerns about providing students with accurate, diverse literature, but these presses presented new challenges for teachers. As Patricia Ann Romero and Don Zancanella describe in their *English Journal* article:

> Large-volume book distributors and 'jobbers' who specialize in selling books to school districts often do not stock titles published by the small presses that are responsible for getting most books by Soto, Cisneros, Mora, Anaya and others into print…These small presses are unable to support their books with the publicity and salesmanship that major publishers provide.[150]

Small presses were limited in their ability to distribute to libraries where teachers and students had access to new books. Nicolás Kanellos, who founded Arte Público Press and first published *The House on Mango Street*, describes the limitations of his small press in selling to libraries: "A lot of times the wholesalers and distributors that specifically deal with libraries have it wrapped up with big companies and it's hard for the little companies to get in. Organizations like the Children's Book Council, basically because of their dues structure, don't allow small organizations to become members. The large

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[149] National Council of Teachers of English Executive Committee, "Resolution on Multicultural Curriculum Materials" (paper presented at the 1975 NCTE Annual Business Meeting San Diego, CA, 1975).

[150] Patricia Ann Romero and Zancanella Don, "Expanding the Circle: Hispanic Voices in American Literature," *The English Journal* 79, no. 1 (1990): 28.

commercial companies who are members exclusively promote their own books." [151] It was thus up to teachers to seek out new texts, scour reviews, and find new works by Latino/a writers. When teachers did identify and gain access to new works, they faced challenges in convincing school boards to accept these texts. School districts often preferred to use low-cost anthologies as a means of giving teachers access to many authors and texts. Anthologies, those cost efficient, often excluded diverse authors from the curriculum.

The best solution for teachers was for large publishers to mass produce multicultural texts at a lower cost, and to market these books using familiar strategies such as sending desk copies, as well as attending school book fairs, and hosting book booths at teacher conferences. However, large, commercial publishers with the ability to utilize these marketing methods were slow to adjust to the multicultural market because of the financial risk involved. As Harriet Rohmer, founder of the multicultural Children's Book Press, notes, "The people who make decisions for those larger publishers less frequently tend to be editors with the knowledge of the book business, and more likely people with a knowledge of numbers. These publishers focus on the blockbuster—the numbers—and they are unwilling to take chances."[152] As a result of this conservative fiscal approach, large commercial presses continued to invest in artists and writers with whom they had established working relationships; publishers were less likely to take on new talent to address the multicultural market. In 1993, Ginny Moore-Kruse, Librarian,

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[151] Patricia J. Wilson, "A Visit with Nicolás Kanellos, Director of the Arte Público Press," *Library Acquisitions: Practice and Theory* 18, no. 2 (1994): 203.

[152] D. A. N. Madigan, "The Politics of Multicultural Literature for Children and Adolescents: Combining Perspectives and Conversations," *Language Arts* 70, no. 3 (1993): 173.

media specialist, children's literature instructor and the director of the Cooperative Children's Book Center at the University of Madison-Wisconsin claims that "Most of the adults involved with creating, promoting, and linking children's books with children are Anglo-American and Euro-American; and they are not likely to spot inconsistencies, inaccuracies and false notes."[153] At the time of interview, after the major multicultural literature boom, large publishing houses had the necessary resources, but the lack of people of color in editorial and artistic positions meant that culturally inaccurate books circulated in an effort to maintain financial success.[154]

As a result of the strengths and limitations of the commercial and independent press systems, a new relationship developed between them—large, commercial publishers began poaching writers and texts from smaller, independent presses to meet the demand for multicultural books. This relationship was openly accepted by small press publishers such as Rohmer, who states "independent publishers have done a lot of innovating; and consequently, larger publishers have copied us. Our role is to continue to innovate."[155] Kanellos built a business plan to incorporate commercial poaching by acting as a literary agent for writers published by Arte Público. When he successfully markets writers to commercial publishers, writers gain notoriety and Arte Público receives royalties for re-print rights.[156] The history of *The House on Mango Street* demonstrates how multicultural education changed literary production through its insistence on

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[153] Ibid., 172.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Ibid., 173.

[156] Katharine Mangan, "Little-Known Press Promotes Works by Hispanics, Unually Ignored by Commercial Publishing World," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 35, no. 36 (1989).

accuracy and diversity, which resulted in the development of a poaching relationship between commercial presses and smaller, independent presses.

2.2 Multiculturalism and The House on Mango Street

Cisneros's publication of *The House on Mango Street* was a result of the twenty-year effort by teachers, students and writers to increase the diversity and teaching of American literature. As teachers developed multicultural pedagogy, civil rights movements worked to revise the scope of American literature by protesting for ethnic studies programs and recovering Latino-American literary history. Outside of academia, emerging writers created new literary communities and publishing opportunities. One of the most influential moments in Latino literature came from the Chicano movement, which began with César Chávez's organization of farmworkers and spread to other important issues within U.S. Latino communities, particularly in regards to education. Playwright Luis Valdez linked literature and the farmworker's movement through the creation of *Teatro Campesino*, a grassroots theater movement that addressed the political and social concerns of Chicanos in the farmworkers' union.[157] The Nuyorican poetry movement voiced the experiences and concerns of poets of Puerto Rican descent living in New York through oral performance poetry, and placed themselves in opposition to mainstream American literature by emphasizing bilingual poetics, oral prowess, and themes of urban oppression/alienation.[158]

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[157] Nicolás Kanellos, *Hispanic Literature of the United States : A Comprehensive Reference* (Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, 2003), 18.

[158] Ibid., 22.

These seemingly opposing aspects of Latino movements—one taking place at the university and consisting of documenting literary history, and the other taking place in communities with a focus on creating literary history—joined together through emerging literary journals and small presses. In 1967, a group of critics at University of California, Berkeley began publishing *El Grito*, and eventually began Quinto Sol press, which published Tomás Rivera's *Y no se lo tragó la tierra* and Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima*, both of which are considered formative Chicano texts.[159] The Chicano literary canon forming around *El Grito* and Quinto Sol was primarily concerned with the treatment of Mexican Americans within U.S. Culture, as well as the formation of a Chicano identity. Consequently, the canon featured native and immigrant literatures from new writers who could help form a nationalist identity and literary movement. This emerging canon characterized the Chicano nation primarily as bilingual, working-class, and dedicated to the return of Aztlán.[160]

But this wave of literature and Chicano nationalism was dominated by a male version of Chicano identity. By the late 1960s, women within the movement began to speak out about the gender inequalities implicit in Chicano nationalism and in activist communities. As a result, Chicanas were accused of working against the interests of *la raza* (the race).[161] But in 1979, the editors of a new literary journal, *La Revista Chicano-Riqueña*, dedicated to publishing Latino writers, began publishing the works of women

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[159] Ibid., 177-79.

[160] Aztlán refers to the region of the United States that was the mythic home to the Aztec nation, representing a return to peace and glory for Chicanos. Ibid.

[161] Guitiérrez in Refugio I. Ed Rochin and Dennis N. Ed Valdes, *Voices of a New Chicana/O History* (2000), 100.

writers including Sandra Cisneros, Ana Castillo, Pat Mora and others who would go on to be the first commercially published Latina writers and pillars of the Latina literary canon.[162] These writers also marked a canonical shift from working-class, activist writers to college-trained writers trained in professional writing programs.

By the time Sandra Cisneros published *The House on Mango Street* in 1984, Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa's groundbreaking anthology, *This Bridge Called My Back* was three years old. It challenged Anglo-American feminism directly by recording and representing the experiences of women of color through a mixed-genre anthology that combined the traditions of creative writing, academic discourse and political writing. Anzaldúa's revolutionary concept of *la mestiza* had yet to be published, but together these two texts marked a shift toward feminist Latina literature in both academia and popular fiction. Feminist Latina literature blossomed in the late 1970s-80s. Soon after, the conference for the National Association for Chicano Studies conference focused *Voces de la Mujer* for the first time in its twelve-year history; Cisneros was present at a book signing event set up by her press and quickly became recognized as an innovative voice in Chicana literature.[163]

The influence of multicultural education is evident not only in the development of U.S. Latino/a literature, but also in the experiences that led Cisneros to write *The House on Mango Street.* From its inception, *The House on Mango Street* was influenced by multicultural education; it could not have been imagined without the MFA program

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[162] These women would also be published by the magazine's associated press, Arte Público Press.

[163] Felicia Cruz, "On the 'Simplicity' of Sandra Cisneros's House on Mango Street," *MFS: Modern Fiction Studies* 47, no. 4 (2001): 911.

system of professionalizing writers. Cisneros was attending one of the most prestigious MFA programs, the Iowa Writers Workshop, when she began to develop the voice and themes that would lead her to *The House on Mango Street*. As one of the few people of color in her program, Cisneros felt intimidated and hyper aware of the difference between her white, privileged classmates and her working-class, Chicano experience.[164] In one particular class, she notes that "I was so intimidated when we were talking about houses and I realized I didn't have a house like my classmates…I was a working-class person…it caused me eventually to become angry and to write from that place of difference."[165] Cisneros's situation mirrors teacher's arguments in favor of multicultural literature in the classroom. Although she was able to overcome her frustration, Cisneros does acknowledge that it could have had the opposite effect, "causing me to run out of the room and quit graduate school in terror."[166] Supporters of multicultural education wanted to avoid this response to education by providing literary works that validate children's experiences. Later, Cisneros was influenced by such multicultural educational projects. She returned to Chicago where she became a teacher at Latino Youth Alternative High School, a school dedicated to promoting the education and well being of Latino students. It was here that Cisneros connected with the experience of other Latinas, weaving together her manuscript using "elements from different parts of my life and extend[ing] into my student's lives."[167]

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[164] Cisneros inWolfgang Binder, ed. *Partial Autobiographies: Interviews with Twenty Chicano Poets* (Erlangen, Germany: Verlag Palm and Enke 1985), 63-66.

[165] Gayle Elliott, "An Interview with Sandra Cisneros," *Missouri Review* 25, no. 1 (2002): 98.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Bridget A. Kevane, *Latina Self-Portraits : Interviews with Contemporary Women Writers*, ed. Juanita Heredia, 1st ed.. ed. (Albuquerque: Albuquerque : University of New Mexico Press, 2000).

The rise of multiculturalism in the United States also played a part in the marketing and publication of the novella. At the time of Arte Público's publication of *The House on Mango Street,* the press had no distribution system, no sales reps and they were not using reviews as a means of getting texts into bookstores.[168] During these early years, the press was working almost entirely in the college market. It wasn't until the press received additional funding in the 1980s that Arte Público was able to bring in people with commercial publishing experience as consultants to help the press reach new markets. Up until that point, Arte Público's marketing strategies included visits to conferences and author tours.[169] The first big break for Cisneros and Arte Público Press came with Stanford's adoption of the text in its "third world literature" course. Kanellos directly acknowledges "it was word about that book circulating through academia that finally lead to a breakthrough for us with the general public."[170]

Arte Público Press both established itself in the academic market and relied on it for stable sales. For the first few years of its existence, 50% of Arte Público's published books were adopted for classroom use; without this high rate of classroom adoption, the press would not have been able to expand to mainstream readers.[171] Academia remained the main market for Arte Público up until the early 1990s when Bantam Doubleday Bell bought the rights to reprint *Rain of Gold*, allowing Arte Público to move into the world of front-list publishing and expand their marketing to the general public.[172] Even with

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[168] Debra D. Andrist, "An Interview with Nicolás Kanellos," *South Central Review* 19, no. 1 (2002): 19.
[169] Ibid., 16-17.
[170] Ibid., 18.
[171] Wilson, "A Visit with Nicolás Kanellos, Director of the Arte Público Press," 203. 201
[172] Andrist, "An Interview with Nicolás Kanellos," 19.

commercial success, textbook adoptions still accounted for 41% of Arte Público sales as of 2003.[173] The tie between multicultural education and Arte Público is clear; in Kanellos' own words, "we kind of helped to create that market in academia…especially at the college level."[174] Multicultural education was thus an important part of the promotion of *The House on Mango Street*. In 1985, the book was awarded The American Book Award from the Before Columbus foundation, an award reserved for books that expand and diversify multicultural literature.[175] Between 1985-1987, Cisneros was able to further promote the book through "public presentations…visits to schools and universities that assigned her work in classes as required reading," which led to a small level of fame for her among student readers.[176]

It is no surprise that when *The House on Mango Street* began to appear in *English Journal*, it did so under the label of multicultural literature. Out of thirty-seven articles in *English Journal,* twenty recommend *The House on Mango Street* for adding multicultural or Chicano/Latino literature to classroom curriculum. After multiculturalism, the most frequent topics of discussion include teaching activities based on Cisneros' work to engage student writing or reluctant readers, and commentaries on student engagement with the text's feminist themes.

The classroom popularity of *The House on Mango Street* as compared to other Chicano/a and Latino/a texts can be partly explained by the relationship of the novel's

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[173] Wilson, "A Visit with Nicolás Kanellos, Director of the Arte Público Press," 201.

[174] Ibid., 206.

[175] Before Columbus Foundation, "Before Columbus Foundation."

[176] Carmen Haydée Rivera, *Border Crossings and Beyond : The Life and Works of Sandra Cisneros* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Santa Barbara, Calif. : Praeger, 2009), 40.

form to its perceived multicultural content. The text is often praised by teachers for its "hybrid of fictive and poetic form," which feels "like an impressionistic painting where the subject isn't clear until the viewer moves back a bit and views the whole."[177] The text is considered a novel, a series of vignettes, short stories, poetry, and even a "complex collection of snapshots." [178] The unique form of the text allows teachers to consider Cisneros's work as innovative and literary, thus addressing the major conflict among teachers regarding the integration of multicultural texts into the high school classroom, as described by Vicky Greenbaum in *English Journal*:

> Some of my colleagues have objected. 'The canon are works of great literature in Western civilization,' says one, while another asserts: 'Surely we shouldn't allow tokenist multicultural politics to dilute the high standards of our literature'…while I don't agree, I hear where people are coming from…The assumption that there is one standard of excellence in literary reading is inculcated in us from the time we're taught to distinguish between 'books we read in English' and 'books we read for fun.' [179]

In addition to the assumption that traditional texts are dominated by white British and American authors, Greenbaum's example also identifies the function of the high school English classroom. As Romero and Zancanella elaborate, "Students leave their high-

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[177] Dianne Klein, "Coming of Age in Novels by Rudolfo Anaya and Sandra Cisneros," *The English Journal* 81, no. 5 (1992): 22.

[178] Patricia Ann Romero and Zancanella Don, "Expanding the Circle: Hispanic Voices in American Literature," ibid.79, no. 1 (1990): 27-28.

[179] Vicky Greenbaum, "Expanding the Canon: Shaping Inclusive Reading Lists," ibid.83, no. 8 (1994).

school English classrooms understanding that 'To Build a Fire' is a classic because it's taught and that it's taught because it's a classic. One might almost offer as an informal definition of the word 'classics' 'the books we had to read in English class.'"[180]

The English Journal authors promoting the inclusion of *The House on Mango Street* in high school or middle school curriculum argue for the text by claiming that it is representative of an under-represented cultural group, it is a great literary work, and that it appeals to young adults. In his recommendation of the text, Thomas F. O'Malley claims that ""Even though Cisneros is a new voice, she holds her own with the classics."[181] He first aligns Cisneros with the canon, but then suggests that she is a "new voice." The idea that a text must have a long publication and reading history perpetuates the exclusion of writers from historically under-published groups, and so O'Malley must both argue for Cisneros's newness (literary innovation) and for her place among older, established classics.

Dianne Klein recommends *The House on Mango Street* because it "is every bit as strong, as literary, and as meaningful as the bildungsromans traditionally read in United States literature classes."[182] She goes on to argue that the text is a "strong coming-of-age story containing many of the elements of the traditional bildungsroman as well as other features that place [it] firmly in the Chicano/a tradition…the protagonists have changed and have moved from initial innocence to knowledge, from childhood to adolescence."[183]

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[180] Patricia Ann Romero and Zancanella Don, "Expanding the Circle: Hispanic Voices in American Literature," ibid.79, no. 1 (1990): 24.

[181] Thomas F. O'Malley, "A Ride Down Mango Street," ibid.86, no. 8 (1997).

[182] Dianne Klein, "Coming of Age in Novels by Rudolfo Anaya and Sandra Cisneros," ibid.81, no. 5 (1992): 26.

[183] Ibid., 22.

This argument simultaneously compares *The House on Mango Street* to classics traditionally taught in high school classrooms, argues that it appeals to young people, and that it satisfies the need for multicultural representation in literature. It also represents a trend in using multicultural bildungsroman as a legitimate genre for attracting the interest of young adult readers.

Teacher responses to the novel link form to content in terms of the novel's "adult" and "young adult" qualities. Marie Stewart Frankson recommends the novel because its "naive, simple point of view" addresses "some mature subjects."[184] Dianne Klein links the novel's form to Esperanza's rites of passage into adulthood through violence, claiming that her "major loss of innocence has to do with gender and with being sexually appropriated by men…Esperanza, triply marginalized by race, class, and gender has lost her innocence."[185] Esperanza's viewpoint is said to appeal to young readers because "Things like racism, sex, friendship, dreams, fears, and family are not just issues. They are experiences…the very experiences that seem to overwhelm them."[186] O'Malley attributes this experiential writing to the form of the novel, which is " more of a collage than…a traditional novel."[187] In all three of the examples above, authors make arguments about the suitability of the novel for teenage readers based on the book's simplistic, poetic form and the classification of its content as mature, coming-of-age, or representative of young adult experience.

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[184] Marie Stewart Frankson, "Chicano Literature for Young Adults: An Annotated Bibliography," ibid.79, no. 1 (1990): 32.

[185] Dianne Klein, "Coming of Age in Novels by Rudolfo Anaya and Sandra Cisneros," ibid.81, no. 5 (1992): 25.

[186] Thomas F. O'Malley, "A Ride Down Mango Street," ibid.86, no. 8 (1997): 35.

[187] Ibid., 37.

As teachers tried to justify the addition of multicultural texts to English curriculum, they had to argue for a text based on both form and content. Aesthetically, they had to strike a balance between a text's literary sophistication as well as its accessibility for adolescent readers. In relation to content, they had to argue that a text had "multicultural" value, but that its content related to issues faced by adolescent readers without crossing a line into adult content. These criteria were dependent upon an imagined reader, one addressed both by the author and by educators. María Elena Valdés identifies Cisneros' symbolic reader as Chicana women because *The House on Mango Street* is dedicated to "las mujeres" and because the text addresses "Chicana women, their identity and status in society."[188] Felicia J. Cruz adds adolescents to this conceptualization of the symbolic reader from a teacher's point of view, claiming that students and critics appreciate the text's "lyrical, albeit 'simplistic' tone, while others related to the trials and tribulations of the novel's young female protagonist."[189]

Both Valdés and Cruz refer to the tension between the symbolic reader and the actual reader, a relationship central to reader-response theory, which also happens to be the literary approach most commonly used among secondary school teachers in the United States. Central to the interaction between reader and text, as outlined by reader-response theorists, is the concept of "gaps," between the text and reader experience. It is through filling the gaps in the text that readers interpret a work. Texts create gaps through content, and teachers can encourage students to engage with multicultural content

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[188] Maria Elena de Valdes, "The Critical Reception of Sandra Cisneros' the House on Mango Street," *Gender, self and society: proceedings of the IV International Conference on the Hispanic Cultures of the United States* (1993): 292.

[189] Cruz, "On the 'Simplicity' of Sandra Cisneros's House on Mango Street," 912.

through requiring students to use their own experience to relate to the unfamiliar experiences of another person. But the text must also use aesthetic strategies that challenge the reader to fill gaps by using sophisticated reading strategies.

The House on Mango Street meets both criteria through content and aesthetic ellipses inherent in the vignette form. Elision in this text occurs through two narrative strategies: the juxtaposition of linked vignettes, and the use of poetic language to create an interpretive gap in plot. Cisneros juxtaposes vignettes to create a story that contains ellipses in time. One such storyline is the development of the relationship between narrator Esperanza and her friend Sally. Over the course of several vignettes, it is revealed that Sally's father physically abuses her in an attempt to control her sexuality. When the narrator first introduces Sally in the eponymous vignette, Esperanza admires her from afar, fantasizing about a better world for Sally, one in which, "No one could yell at you if they saw you out in the dark leaning against a car, leaning against somebody without someone thinking you are bad, without somebody saying it is wrong."[190] The vignette ends with Esperanza imagining Sally's inner desire to "to love and to love and to love and love," and her reassurance that "no one could call that crazy." Esperanza's fantasy of Sally takes place in an imaginary moment of escape from the home, implying that this desire to love comes from Sally's miserable home life, where "Her father says to be this beautiful is trouble…Then she can't go out."[191] The details of Sally's relationship with her father are left unsaid. The reader then has to imagine the possibly abusive

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[190] Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (New York: A.A. Knopf : Distributed by Random House, 1994), 83.

[191] Ibid., 81.

methods Sally's father uses to control her behavior, and the menace that forces Sally to change her physical appearance on her way home from school.

The text also creates space for reader interpretation between vignettes. For example, the character of Sally does not appear again for four more vignettes, and during this gap our narrator Esperanza continues to process the world and how it responds to women. Esperanza discovers her mother's aspirations, analyzes the role of the femme fatale in movies, and learns about domestic abuse from a neighborhood friend who married young. Between vignettes, Esperanza has grown, and so has her relationship to Sally. When Sally returns, readers learn of Sally's abuse and disappearance after "one day her father catches her talking to a boy, and the next day she doesn't come to school…he just went crazy, he just forgot he was her father between the buckle and the belt."[192] In this moment, as the abuse becomes physical, Sally's presence becomes elliptical; her father's cognizance of her is erased in the act of abuse. But Sally returns to subjectivity as she retells the abuse to Esperanza who then fills in the unspeakable parts of Sally's story, validating the reader's assumptions about abuse.

Valdés describes this effect of the vignette form on the reading process as a "strategy of weaving rather than of telling a tale." Through vignettes, the text "is a picture that must be woven, thread by thread, a tapestry of one year in the life of a young Chicana."[193] Although Valdés does not identify the ellipses as an aesthetic strategy, her description of vignettes as "closed" and "open" images illustrates the elliptical nature of the text's form: "Each of the closed images adds another figure to the tapestry of the

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[192] Ibid., 93.

[193] Valdes, "The Critical Reception of Sandra Cisneros' the House on Mango Street," 293.

paradox of not belonging where you belong…The open-ended entries come together only as the tapestry takes shape…"[194] This weaving process becomes particularly important as both reader and Esperanza learn to see ellipses as important to the lives of the women Esperanza encounters; Esperanza witnesses their containment and disappearances.

The gaps in the text must be filled in through knowledge of Chicana social and political positions,[195] and readers must apply that knowledge to understand Esperanza's experience in the last Sally vignette, "Red Clowns." This vignette is complicated by a plot ellipsis—we don't know exactly what has happened to Esperanza, only that she has been traumatized. Echoing an earlier vignette, Esperanza begins with Sally's words: "Sally you lied. It wasn't what you said at all."[196] She then moves into a vague explanation of this lie and her assault: "What he did. Where he touched me. I didn't want it, Sally." She both states her resistance to the assault, and makes it clear that she was "touched," rather than hit, implying sexual assault. But, beyond that Esperanza only tells us that there was a group of boys, one of which "grabbed me by the arm, he wouldn't let me go. He said I love you, Spanish girl, I love you, and pressed his sour mouth to mine."[197] There are several actions that could have occurred—the boy could have groped her and kissed her in front of his friends or he may have raped her.

Instead of forcing readers to witness the assault on Esperanza, the vignette requires readers to fill in narrative gaps through relating the descriptions of her

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[194] Ibid.

[195] Sonia Saldívar-Hull, *Feminism on the Border: Chicana Gender Politics and Literature* (Berkeley: Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 92.

[196] Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street*, 99.

[197] Ibid. 100

surroundings to a larger cultural context. Esperanza prompts this interpretation when she says,

> Why did you leave me all alone? I waited my whole life. You're a liar. They all lied. All the books and magazines, everything that told it wrong. Only his dirty fingernails against my skin, only his sour smell again. The moon that watched. The tilt-a-whirl. The red clowns laughing their thick-tongue laugh. Then the colors began to whirl. Sky tipped. Their black gym shoes ran." [198]

Esperanza blames Sally for failing to protect her physically and emotionally, but this passage also implicates a larger cultural system of "books and magazines" that has influenced Esperanza to wait her "whole life" for "it," which is left ambiguous. "It" can refer to sex, a first kiss, or love; all of these experiences are interwoven, and that's part of the difficulty Esperanza faces as she enters into adolescence with Sally as a role model. Esperanza's vague references require both the reader's acknowledgment of cultural narratives about sex and love as well as the cultural methods used to disseminate such narratives.

These elliptical narrative strategies allow readers to interpret *The House on Mango Street* through their own cultural lenses. In her reflections on teaching the text over ten years at the college level, Cruz notes that "The majority of my undergraduate students overlooked the regional specificity of the novel, sidestepping its pointed focus on the relation between issues of ethnicity and class…the protagonist's Chicana

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[198] Ibid., 100.

background and working-class roots. The students focused instead on feelings of alienation, discomfiture, and solitude that they themselves had experienced as children."[199] In her study of *The House on Mango Street* and *Bless Me, Ultima* as representative Latino texts, Delia Poey calls this ability to read for universal experience in a text "manageable difference." Poey argues that the "child narrator in particular facilitates problematic readings of Chicanas and Chicanos as childlike, which undercuts anxiety regarding the policing of minority individuals and communities."[200] It also allows readers to focus on childhood as a universal experience rather than acknowledge that childhood may vary according to a child's social position within the United States. As a result, readers may never have to consider how Esperanza's experience is related to a working-class, Chicana, urban identity. Felicia J. Cruz argues that Cisneros's self-proclaimed goal of making the book accessible through everyday language, and the bildungsroman form which allows for teachers to add the text into "a politically correct multicultural framework, [which]…ultimately distills into the barest of generalized (generic?) plots: Hispanic girl heroically strives for and thrives because of the American dream."[201]

2.3 The Impact of The House on Mango Street

Large, commercial publishers benefited from their poaching of multicultural literature as a means gaining a wider foothold in the multicultural education market.

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[199] Cruz, "On the 'Simplicity' of Sandra Cisneros's House on Mango Street," 921.

[200] Delia Poey, *Latino American Literature in the Classroom : The Politics of Transformation* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), 88.

[201] Cruz, "On the 'Simplicity' of Sandra Cisneros's House on Mango Street."

Through Cisneros, Vintage was able to both interact with and secure a larger part of the educational market; in 1991 Vintage reissued *The House on Mango Street* with a 15,000-copy re-print and sent Cisneros on a book-signing tour through ten major cities. Such tours made Cisneros available to teachers interested in expanding their knowledge of multicultural literature.[202] In 1994, following a 10-year anniversary re-print with an introduction by Cisneros, Vintage launched another book tour. Two years later, Cisneros was so well established that she was invited to speak as the keynote speaker for the National Council of Teachers of English conference. In addition to promoting Cisneros to educators, Vintage published a translation of the text in an attempt to reach a Spanish speaking market with a spin-off book using the vignette "Pelitos/Hairs" from *The House on Mango Street.* This children's book "pictorially captured the multicultural appreciation of hair textures" and was created for the multicultural (multilingual) children's book market.[203] The acquisition of the book by a commercial press ultimately benefitted the author, the publisher and teachers.

Entering into the multicultural education market also opened up possibilities for educational publishers to capitalize on the need for teaching materials, textbook packages and other supplementary materials related to emerging multicultural curriculum. In the early 1990s, for example, Jane Schaffer publications ran several ads in each issue of *English Journal* offering "reproducible curriculum guides" that included "teacher background materials, introductory lessons, study questions, essay prompts and sources

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[202] Of the 10 NCTE articles that specifically reference *The House on Mango Street,* only three were written before the Vintage re-print. All three of these articles mention how difficult it is for teachers to find works by small presses. See Greenbaum, Frankson as well as Romero and Zancanella for details of these discussions.

[203] Rivera, *Border Crossings and Beyond : The Life and Works of Sandra Cisneros*, 51.

for additional materials" for literature courses. Of these guides focused on single texts, all but *The Great Gatsby* could be considered recent additions to multicultural curriculum.[204] Currently, Random House (of which Vintage is an imprint) also provides teaching materials on *The House on Mango Street* through its "Random House: For High School Teachers" website, and continues to capitalize on the educational value of the text, in addition to publishing the book itself.

The entrance of commercial publishers into the multicultural education market led to changes in commercial publishing valued Latina writers. Cisneros herself is a case in point. *The House on Mango Street* caught the eye of literary agent Susan Bergholz, who contacted Cisneros, eventually became her agent, and landed her the contract with Random House/Vintage Press. Cisneros was awarded a $100,000 advance for her next work of fiction, the most lucrative contract ever given to a Chicano/a writer.[205] With this deal, Cisneros officially broke through a racial boundary in commercial publishing. The popularity of *The House on Mango Street* opened up publishing possibilities for both Cisneros and other Latina writers through a broader variety of publishers.[206]

As a small, independent publisher, Arte Público grew exponentially after the success of *The House on Mango Street*. Nicolás Kanellos acknowledges that though *The Wall Street Journal* spoke of *The House of Mango Street* as a poor replacement for the classics, "that helped because more of the general public got to learn about our books." [207] After this point, the press was able to start branching out from academia into

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[204] "Back Matter," *The English Journal* 84, no. 1 (1995).
[205] *Border Crossings and Beyond : The Life and Works of Sandra Cisneros*, 42.
[206] Ibid., 6.
[207] Andrist, "An Interview with Nicolás Kanellos," 18.

bookstores, and to book tours and promotional work.[208] Consequently, many of Arte Público's authors have gone on to publish with large commercial presses who then challenged Arte Público's rights to publication. By allowing commercial publishers to poach its authors, Arte Público gained greater financial stability and is ability and can support the publication of lesser-known authors. [209] Commercial publishers then profit off of successful authors first published by smaller presses.

The popularity of the novella also brought with it greater financial stability and professional clout for Cisneros herself, through special grants and awards intended to promote diverse literatures. Cisneros received two grants from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the American Book Award for *The House on Mango Street*, and a Lannan Award for Fiction for *Woman Hollering Creek*.[210] Each of these awards seeks to expand the diversity of American literature, either culturally or aesthetically. Cisneros also received unrelated to the promotion of multicultural literature, such as the PEN west award and numerous notable book awards from newspapers and magazines. She received the MacArthur Foundation award, which is not concerned with the multicultural literature in particular, but uses a nomination process in which nationally recognized artists nominate other artists for the fellowship. The nominees have to show a proven record of excellence (in the case of literature, publication and artistic community involvement); for Cisneros, this record of excellence depends largely on the dissemination of her works as

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[208] Ibid.

[209] Jaime Armin Mejía, "Arte Público: A Press for the Next Millennium," *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature* 37, no. 3 (1999): 28.

[210] Rivera, *Border Crossings and Beyond : The Life and Works of Sandra Cisneros*, 51.

multicultural literature. As a result of these awards and grants, Cisneros was able to devote herself to writing as a full-time occupation.

The association of Cisneros with multicultural literature and education has led to assumptions about her identity. Texts considered "multicultural" literature have the added burden of being representational, especially in the educational setting, where multiculturalism is often thought of as a way for students to learn about other cultures. Cisneros acknowledges this limitation. In a 2002 interview, Cisneros says that "A lot of people mistake the *persona* that I create in poetry and fiction with *me*...They know the work, or they know the persona in the work, and they confuse that with me, the writer. They don't realize that the persona is also a creation and a fabrication, the composite of my friends and myself all pasted together."[211] As a result of this burden of authenticity, Cisneros's work takes on political meaning, which she understands as an effect rather than the purpose of her writing. When asked how she influences "the consciousness of other people" as both artist and political activist, Cisneros replied: "When I was younger, I used to think that it didn't have any effect, but I think that because all those issues are inside me already, that if I just write from that very deep place and if I take the writing far enough, all of those issues will come out anyway without me getting on a soapbox. The world becomes political just by me writing from my passions."[212] Political activism and her identity as a Chicana writer led to an inherently political standpoint, and she benefits from not having to take an overtly political stance to bring political issues to the attention of her readers. In her role as a Chicana *literary* great, Cisneros takes an integrated

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[211] Elliott, "An Interview with Sandra Cisneros," 109.

[212] Ibid. 109

approach to understanding her ethnic identity and development as a writer. She claims "the only reason why *I* write…is so I can find out something about myself. Writers have this narcissistic obsession about how we got to be who we are."[213] Part of this self-discovery leads her back to her Chicana identity: "When I think about what makes me different, I'm always looking at my Mexican culture. Of course I like to write about love, bet then I'll ask, how is Mexican love different from American love?"[214] The desire to understand herself also results in a push toward literary innovation. Just as Cisneros pushes herself to discover the differences between her Mexican and American cultures, she pushes herself to discover new territory in her writing. In retrospect, she notes that "I could do another *The House on Mango Street* in that voice and just go on with her life, and everybody would be really happy…But I don't want to do that because that child voice comes easily to me…If I'm going to use it, I have to do something a little bit different."[215]

This push to remain artistically innovative has resulted in variety within her works, but it also pushes her toward breaking stereotypes of Chicana/o fiction at large. The awareness of Chicana literature as a genre and how it will be perceived as authentic, has led Cisneros to understanding that "In Chicana writing, the love between a grandmother and a granddaughter is holier than the relationship between a mother and a daughter…But I hate when I see any kind of cliché occurring in writing, so that's why she's a wonderful cliché for me to throw rocks at."[216] In this discussion of *Caramelo*,

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[213] Ibid., 101.
[214] Ibid., 102.
[215] Ibid., 100.
[216] Ibid., 102-03.

Cisneros seeks to subvert both racial stereotypes as well as stereotypes at the craft level. The two are intertwined within her creative process; and thus the effects of multicultural education and her classification as a Chicana writer influence how she creates new works and challenges herself as a writer.

The effects of multicultural education on Cisneros, other Latina writers and publishing history have been widespread and helped to transform the literary canon, but there is a difference between claiming that multicultural education had a *significant* influence and a *large* influence. *The House on Mango Street* has sold millions of copies, been translated into twelve languages and been incorporated into middle school, high school and college curriculum throughout the United States. However, the success of Cisneros and other authors of color within mainstream publishing remains limited. By 1990, just fifteen years after NCTE made its declaration in support of multicultural education, and several decades after the initial push for multicultural literature in the 60s and 70s, Ginny Moore-Kruse claimed that there are 65,000-70,000 children's books in print, and in the last two or three years there have been 4,000-5,000 children's books published each year. Only a small percentage of those books can be classified as multicultural."[217] Many of the books published as multicultural literature disappeared from the bookshelves if not adopted by texts. So while Cisneros represents a very successful example of how the publishing and educational systems changed in response to demands for multicultural representation in American literature, she is one of few

[217] Madigan, "The Politics of Multicultural Literature for Children and Adolescents: Combining Perspectives and Conversations," 170.

Latina/o writers that have been incorporated into a predominantly white American literary canon.

CHAPTER 3. GENDER IN YOUNG ADULT PUBLISHING

Since the 1990s young adult literature has become a major force in bookselling and publishing. As discussed in Chapter One, YAL is experiencing a renaissance, and it is impossible to talk about the current politics of young adult publishing without discussing the impact of J.K. Rowling and the *Harry Potter* series. The series broke publishing rules about children and adult reading habits as the books were consumed by readers of all ages.[218] It also increased the sales of other titles; Rowling also ushered in an era of superstar publishing, in which publishers spend significantly more money on the publishing and marketing of single authors and sacrifice the diversity of their book lists hoping for the next big phenomenon.[219] In 2008, when the final *Harry Potter* book was released, the series earned 12.2% of Scholastic's entire revenue for the year.[220]

Rowling's popularity and the response to her success demonstrate Bourdieu's theory that literary hierarchies are maintained by setting up dichotomies of high and low art based on an inverse relationship between aesthetic and economic value. Young adult literature is placed in opposition to literary fiction, thereby preserving cultural capital for writers and readers of literary fiction. Rowling's overwhelming popularity sparked

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[218] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 98.

[219] David Agaostino and the editors of Simba Information Michael Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2007," (New Providence, NJ2006), 3.

[220] Warren Pawlowski and editors of Simba Information Michael Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2010," in *Children's Publishing Market Forecast*, ed. Simba Information (Stamford, CT2009), 30.

controversy and served as a reason for critics to further distinguish between literary fiction and young adult literature. In newspapers and magazines across the globe, critics of the series worried about "the juvenilization of everything," criticizing the "sad grown-ups" who choose "the lowest common denominator, which is the children's book."[221] By 2004, adult publishers had complained so often about Rowling's extensive stint on *The New York Times* bestseller list that the newspaper created a separate list for children's bestsellers.[222] While perhaps practical, this move essentially denied that many of her readers were adults. These distinctions do not simply assign cultural value, but also work to preserve social hierarchies within U.S. Culture at large.

Rowling is not only significant as the center of anxieties about generational crossover reading, she is perhaps also the cause and justification for assumptions about women dominating the field of young adult literature. The *NYT* not only added a Children's list to keep Rowling out of the adult list, but has since added a Children's Series Bestseller list to match the rise of the series within YAL and children's publishing, thus creating space for more texts to be recognized while simultaneously isolating them further from adult literary acclaim. The series list has been dominated by three women authors for almost ten years: Rowling, Stephanie Meyers (*Twilight*) and Suzanne Collins (*The Hunger Games*). In the case of young adult fiction—viewed as a genre of girl readers and women writers—the relegation of this genre to low cultural status also renders unimportant the stories of girls and the contributions of women writers to American culture.

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[221] Various critics quoted in Falconer, "Young Adult Fiction and the Crossover Phenomenon," 2-4.
[222] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 96.

As one of the most lucrative areas of publishing for writers, young adult fiction is an important location for debates about gender in publishing because if women are privileged in positions as writers and publishing staff, it is one of the few genres in which women do have an advantage. Given recent findings about the gender pay gap in publishing by *Publishers Weekly*, and Department of Labor findings that confirm women are paid less than their male counterparts, YAL publishing may represent one of the few areas in which women workers flourish. An analysis of the discourse in YAL, which has supposedly reversed the gender gap, can reveal the current climate for women in one of their most beneficial financial environments.

This chapter examines the assumption that YAL is a genre produced by for and about women and girls in order to reveal how cultural and economic capital is divided along gendered lines within the publishing industry. The assumption that women dominate the field of young adult literature comes from two seemingly oppositional stances. The first is a feminist approach that recognizes the contributions of women writers in this literary field, and tries to preserve a safe space for women writers within a publishing industry that typically favors men. The second approach takes a post-feminist stance on literature, assuming that gender equality in literature has been achieved, and thus views YAL as a feminized genre in which men authors are underrepresented and boys have limited access to appropriate reading material. However, this chapter demonstrates that the genre of YAL does not overwhelmingly favor women, but approaches gender parity. These assumptions underlie the use of methods of suppressing women's writing that have persisted for hundreds of years. Instead, "false categorization," and "suppressing context," are still used as a means of erasing women's

literary contributions. Additionally, current debates about gender and young adult publishing expose a new method of suppressing women's writing, that of appropriating feminist claims of sexism to argue that suppressing men's writing is the new norm within publishing. The misunderstanding of gender parity within the industry may have consequences for women writers, and this chapter concludes with suggestions for further research on the gendered editorial and selection practices in twenty-first century publishing.

Through examining the gendered dynamics of young adult literary production and distribution, this chapter extends feminist contributions to women's literary history in line with the work begun in *How to Suppress Women's Writing* by Joanna Russ. In this study of the politics of women's art and literature, Russ outlines the key methods used to prevent or discourage women from creating art.

> If certain people are not supposed to have the ability to produce 'great' literature, and if this supposition is one of the means used to keep such people in their place, the ideal situation (socially speaking) is one in which such people are prevented from producing any literature at all. But a formal prohibition tends to give the game away…if significant literature can by definition be produced only in Latin, the custom of not teaching Latin to girls will again, sooner or later, cause somebody to wonder what would happen if the situation were changed."[223]

[223] Joanna Russ, *How to Suppress Women's Writing* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1983).

Instead of direct suppression, Russ argues that there are strategies and patterns for "ignoring, condemning, or belittling artistic works" of people who occupy lower positions in the social hierarchy, thus allowing art to be one of the areas in which a dominant group justifies continued domination by pointing to the inferiority of a subordinate.[224] The study identifies patterns in the suppression of women's writing that Russ categorizes into key areas: "informal prohibitions" such as limiting access to materials and education; "denying the authorship of the work"; denying the artistic value of a work; "isolation of the work from the tradition to which it belongs"; rejecting the work as scandalous (for a woman to write); or ignoring the work or tradition completely.[225]

How to Suppress Women's Writing (1983) is important to my own study of the gendered politics in publishing young adult literature not only because these strategies of suppressing women's writing relate to the backlash against women's supposed domination of YAL, but also because of the feminist methods used in Russ's work. The study uses traditional reception study methods such as analysis of comments by reviewers, literary critics and other authors as primary sources. But it also documents Russ's personal experiences, those of emerging writers, and anecdotes of her colleagues to reveal the daily experiences that discourage women from pursuing careers in literature. This second method is a key component in feminist methodology, in which personal experience is a valid part of research because women's oppression is often obscured and undocumented. The combination of traditional literary studies methods with such

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[224] Ibid., 5.

[225] Ibid.

"reports from the field,"[226] is also necessary in the study of women writers of young adult literature; most of the conversations and debates surrounding gender politics in YAL publishing occur in online environments such as blogs, email chains, and interviews in online magazines.

While Russ is concerned with all stages of the suppression of women's writing, Barbara Smith's "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism" (1980) is useful in its examination of the suppression of women's writing that occurs through a misreading of women's texts. In analyzing how specialized agents (white feminist and male critics) deny literary status to black women's writing, Smith outlines a new method of reading black women's writing to assess literary value. Most importantly, Smith seeks to "understand what the existence or non-existence of Black lesbian writing reveals about the state of Black women's culture and the intensity of *all* women's oppression." Smith's study of the reception of black women's writing asserts a connection between the politics of literature and the politics of representation and visibility in American culture. Likewise, my own chapter asserts a connection between the discourse surrounding women's position within young adult literature and the "post-feminist" politics of the United States in the twentieth century, in which feminism is not part of the public discourse because it is assumed that women have accomplished the goals of second-wave feminist movements.

Recently, an organization of women writers have spawned a return to quantitative feminist reception study. In 2009, poet Cate Marvin and a community of women authors created VIDA: Women in Literary Arts as a response to the continued lack of

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[226] This term comes from a series of editorials published through the VIDA: Women in Literary Arts organization, which uses a similar methodology to document individual women's experiences as authors.

representation of women in literature. The organization launched the "VIDA Count," an annual report in which VIDA examines gender representation in the major literary review venues. Each year VIDA researchers count the number of women reviewers and the number of women reviewed by the top fifteen review venues for (high) literary arts.[227] Like Smith's work, VIDA recognizes the importance of reviews to the survival of women's writing, but also focuses on reviews as necessary to the economic survival of women artists. The count "compiles over 1000 data points from the top tier, or "Tier 1" journals, publications, and press outlets used within the literary community to define and reward its most valued artists. Reviews are important because public recognition creates opportunities for artists to become the "feeders" for grants, teaching positions, residencies, fellowships, further publication, and ultimately, propagation of artists' work within the literary community."[228] The organization's quantitative methodology has had a significant impact on important review venues, with magazines and journals such as *Harpers* and *The New Republic* making public declarations to improve gender representation, and following through with significant progress toward gender parity in reviewers.[229] The VIDA count also updates the methodological tradition of *How to Suppress Women's Writing* by combining a quantitative approach to documenting the visibility of women's writing in reviews and through their editorial blog series, "reports from the field," in which women writers document their experiences of sexism in the publishing industry. Just as VIDA looks at the relationship between authors and the

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[227] "Vida: Women in Literary Arts," http://www.vidaweb.org/about-vida/.

[228] Ibid.

[229] Amy King, "The Year of Intersectional Thinking," VIDA: Women in Literary Arts, http://www.vidaweb.org/the-2015-vida-count/.

reviewing mechanism, my chapter will examine the relationship between gender and the means of distribution (teachers, librarians and parents) and the means of publication (agents, editors, publishers).

3.1 Current Debates about Gender in YAL

Children's and Young adult literature is one of the few areas within U.S. literature that is understood by readers, writers and publishers as woman-dominated. It is held as common knowledge that the YAL industry favors women as writers, editors, publishers and distributors of literature. It is also one of the few areas of literature in which those in the industry openly discuss the politics of publishing. These discussions occur not among academic literary critics, but among writers, agents and editors. Many of these debates occur online, allowing for an accelerated conversation that might take years to form if it occurred through academic channels. Online conversations also allow writers to participate in brief conversations while maintaining a focus on their creative writing.[230] One of the best ways to get a sense of the current discourse about gender in YAL is to examine online responses to author interviews circulating in author and YAL community blogs. Another method is to seek out interviews in industry trade magazines. Through these sources, two stances emerge in the conflict over the role gender plays in young adult literature.

The first approach to understanding gender in YAL, often voiced by women authors and YAL enthusiasts, argues that YAL is a women's genre because it is for, by

[230] One such example is the *Diversity in YA* website created by authors Malinda Lo and Cindy Pon which has become influential as has a primary tool for educators and a source of information on the state of diversity in YAL.

and about women. As mentioned in the first chapter of this dissertation, Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer* is often considered the first YA novel, and S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders* is considered groundbreaking because it kickstarted the problem novel trend and dared to introduce social commentary into the genre. In the 1980s, as *Sweet Valley* and *The Babysitters Club* series rose in popularity, women authored and created franchises that reinvigorated the publishing industry.[231] And finally, J.K. Rowling, Stephanie Meyers and Suzanne Collins changed the industry again by creating series that broke through gender and age crossover reading barriers, making YAL acceptable for all ages.

YAL is also considered a girl's genre because it most frequently tells the stories of girls. As Kelly Jensen of *Book Riot* points out, there is not only a history of women's books as landmark texts that have defined young adult literary history, there is also a history of censoring women's books as inappropriate for young readers. In the American Library Association's list of top 100 most frequently challenged books, groundbreaking YA texts by women writers have consistently made the list: Judy Blume, Louis Duncan, Laurie Halse Anderson, Sonya Sones Patricia McCormick, and J.K. Rowling, to name a few.[232] The history of this censorship points to some of the intricacies of the gendered politics of young adult literature. Jensen argues that women are more likely to have their work challenged because these books are "about what happens **to** girls, not books **for** girls. There's physical violence, romance of all shades (between a girl and a boy, a girl

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[231] Nicole Brinkley, "'Women Built This Castle': An in-Depth Look at Sexism in Ya.," YA Interrobang, http://www.yainterrobang.com/sexism-in-ya/.

[232] Kelly Jensen, "A Censored History of Ladies in Ya Fiction," Book Riot, http://bookriot.com/2014/03/24/censored-history-ladies-ya-fiction/.

and more than one boy, a girl and a girl), sexual violence, self-harm, tough but real language, and sex/sexuality."[233] In Jensen's analysis of YAL censorship, she claims that "these challenges stem from fears about girls' stories coming to the front and being told…Blume has more titles on the most-challenged list than any other [YAL] author—even Robert Cormier could only muster three—because being female and writing issues girls face are challenge-and-ban worthy actions."[234] Attempts to ban books by authors such as Blume fit into the suppression of women's writing according to the "double standard of content." In Russ's analysis of the criticism surrounding Virginia Woolf, Anne Sexton, Charlotte Bronte and other famous writers, she traces a history of using a "pollution of agency" to "promulgate the idea that women make themselves ridiculous by creating art, or that writing or painting is immodest."[235] In the case of young adult literature, it is not the act of creation that is immodest, but the act of voicing taboo experiences belonging particularly to girlsthat is considered indecent for young readers.

Writers, agents, and publishers frequently voice the assumption that YA content is focused on girls,[236] but this stance often conflates YAL with the genre of romance. For example, in a 2013 feature article of prominent YA agents in *Publisher's Weekly,* Jenny Bent of Bent Agency claims that "because the YA audience is overwhelmingly female, there's an insatiable market for engrossing romances…My sense is that this is where YA

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[233] Ibid.

[234] Ibid.

[235] Russ, *How to Suppress Women's Writing*, 25.

[236] See Rachel Deahl, "Where the Boys Are Not: Does the Lack of Men in Publishing Hurt the Industry?," *Publishers Weekly*, 2010/09/20/ 2010. Also see Sue Corbett, "New Trends in Ya: The Agents' Perspective.(Young Adult Publishing)," ibid.260, no. 39 (2013): 27. Roger Sutton, "Gender by the Numbers," Horn Book Guide, http://www.hbook.com/2015/03/blogs/read-roger/gender-by-the-numbers/#_.

is going right now. Intense, emotional, contemporary fiction."[237] In a scathing critique of adult readers of YA fiction, *Slate* reviewer Ruth Graham asked, "When chapter after chapter in *Eleanor & Park* ends with some version of 'He'd never get enough of her,' the reader seems to be expected to swoon. But how can a grown-up, even one happy to be reminded of the shivers of first love, not also roll her eyes?"[238] In both instances, YAL, a genre concerned with the emotions and experiences attached to coming of age, is either confused with the genre of romance as in Graham's piece, or considered a close cousin of the romance genre as in Bent's comment. YA feminist columnist and blogger Lizzie Skurnick, who was also one of the writers for the *Sweet Valley High* series, acknowledges that YAL is considered girls' literature. In her research for a project aimed at re-publishing young adult classics from the seventies and eighties, she found that people often perceive YAL as a romance genre despite the fact that "it is actually quite hard to find a standard romance" in the classic YA texts she tries to revive.[239] This conflation of young adult fiction with the romance genre is what Russ calls "false categorization," which occurs when "authors are belittled by assigning them to the 'wrong' category, denying them entry into the 'right' category, or arranging the categories so the majority of 'wrong' [authors] fall into the 'wrong' category without anyone's having to do anything further about the matter."[240] Through falsely categorizing *Eleanor and Park* as YAL when she is criticizing its qualities as a romance novel, Ruth Graham ensures that

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[237] Corbett, "New Trends in Ya: The Agents' Perspective.(Young Adult Publishing)," 27.

[238] Ruth Graham, "Against Ya," Book Review, *Slate Book Review* (2014), http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/books/2014/06/against_ya_adults_should_be_embarrassed_to_read_children_s_books.html.

[239] Lizzie Skurnick, interview by Jessica Jernigan, September 12, 2014, 2014.

[240] Russ, *How to Suppress Women's Writing*, 25.

young adult literature will be criticized according to the rules of the romance genre---a genre which has long been associated with escapism for women.[241]

While there are certainly negative consequences for this false categorization, the assumption that romance and YA genres are similar in content may open up opportunities for women writers and readers. To resist false categorization, womenclaim young adult literature as a place for realistic stories about girls' lives, as a space for supporting the development of young women as well as the writing careers of women writers who are underrepresented in other literary genres. By claiming YAL as a woman's genre, YA bloggers, readers and women authors take a feminist approach to preserving the history of women's contributions to young adult literature.

The second perspective on gender in YAL takes a post-feminist view, asserting that women's domination of YAL is problematic in that it limits opportunities for men authors and boy readers. Several of the agents interviewed for the *Publisher's Weekly* article on the status of YA publishing in 2013 worried "about how to lure more male readers into the YA fold." Agent Laura Rennert claims that the lack of boy readers creates a cycle of omission: "Without the readership, there's a precipitous drop-off in material for older teen boys. We need more super-smart guy books like *Winger.*"[242] In conducting interviews for her book project, *Shelf Discovery*, Lizzie Skurnick found that "every male reviewer complained and said, 'We read these books too.' And it was, like, well who said you didn't? A book doesn't say 'Only for girls.' The collection actually

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[241] Janice Radway has explored the prejudices against readers and writers of romance novels in depth in *Reading the Romance.*

[242] Corbett, "New Trends in Ya: The Agents' Perspective.(Young Adult Publishing)," 30.

reviews plenty of books by men…I can't even talk about a genre that was ghettoized because it was by women without also talking about men, too."[243] The assumption is that a predominance of women writers discourages boy readers and excludes men as authors; this argument can only be made by implying that gender equality has long been achieved, and women are no longer underprivileged or underrepresented in literature.

An analysis of the conflicts surrounding Robert Lipsyte, Scott Bergstrom, and Andrew Smith demonstrates how a post-feminist stance toward gender and publishing both denigrates and rewrites the history of women's work. In 2011, Robert Lipsyte, one of the foundational authors of young adult literature, wrote an essay in *The New York Times Sunday Book Review* called "Boys and Reading: Is There Any Hope?" in which he lamented the female-dominated space in which "talented female novelists fresh from MFA programs who in earlier times would heave been writing mid list adult fiction," now have their novels "bought by female editors, stocked by female librarians and taught by female teachers. It's a cliché but mostly true that while teenage girls will read books about boys, teenage boys will rarely read books with predominately female characters."[244] Lipsyte laments the lost days when YA "tended not to be gender-specific. Many early Y.A. Writers were women who wrote well about both genders."[245] This is problematic, he explains, because "need to be approached individually with books about their fears, choices, possibilities and relationships—the kind of reading that will prick

[243] Skurnick, "Don't Let Classic Ya Novels Go out of Print."
[244] Robert Lipsyte, "Boys and Reading: Is There Any Hope? ," *The New York Times* August 21, 2011 2011.
[245] Ibid.

their dormant empathy, involve them with fictional characters and lead them into deeper engagement with their own lives."[246]

Lipsyte also claims that edgy books for boys "are either not taught or banned." As evidence, he mentions his own novel, *Raider's Night*, which was "frequently banned by male principals and superintendents."[247] Key to Lipsyte's complaint about the YAL industry are three assumptions about the gendered politics of producing, distributing and reading literature. First, he assumes that boys cannot feel empathy for girl characters, an assumption that has been upheld and reproduced through educational curriculum selection and will be discussed shortly. He also assumes, like many in the industry, that women control the means of literary production and distribution, and as such, they are biased towards women writers, thus leaving men fewer opportunities to publish.

The second major debate about gender in YAL publishing emerged over the marketing of Scott Bergstrom as a groundbreaking YA author. Both Bergstrom and his agent denigrated YAL and denied the accomplishments of women in order to promote his work. In an interview with *Publishers Weekly*, Bergstrom claimed, "The morality of the book is a lot more complicated than a lot of YA," because his protagonist faces "all sorts of morally ambiguous choices."[248] As Nicole Brinkley pointed out in her response to the article, Bergstrom ignores the long history of YA novels that deal with moral ambiguity in the face of complex problems. Both Bergstrom and his agents set him in opposition to *The Hunger Games*, which has been well received because of its morally ambiguous

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[246] Ibid.

[247] Ibid.

[248] Sue Corbett, "Ya Debut Gets Six-Figure Deal, Sold to 16 Territories and Jerry Bruckheimer," *Publishers Weekly*, November 24, 2015 2015, 1.

portrayal of the protagonist's acts of violence during wartime.[249] This strategy encourages readers to see the literary value of his novel, as the largest complaint about young adult literature is that its didactic nature necessarily excludes the ambiguities inherent in adult fiction. Bergstrom's novel itself directly critiques YA dystopian fiction featuring girl protagonists as "all the same. Poor teenage heroine, having to go to war when all you really want is to write in your diary about how you're in love with two different guys and can't decide between them."[250] The critique both conflates the romance and YA genres while de-valuing girls' concerns with love. It creates a hierarchy that places cultural, public concerns over private emotional concerns, as if the two do not happen simultaneously within girls' lived experiences.[251] Bergstrom's agent Tracey Adams also tried to set Bergstrom apart by claiming that "Kicking butt to save your dad is actually a lot easier for me to swallow than kids killing kids in *The Hunger Games.*"[252] The comment ignores that the *Hunger Games* parallels the strategies used to create child soldiers in actuality, portraying the books as a gratuitous and purposeless use of violence.

Both Lipsyte and Bergstrom utilize a strategy to suppress women's writing. They appropriate women's experiences of sexism in publishing in order to portray themselves as victimized by the women-centered field of YAL. Lipsyte's editorial for *The New York Times* began with a description of his treatment "as a sideshow," when Harper Collins "dressed five of its male young adult authors in blue baseball jerseys with out names on the back and sent us up to bat in a panel entitled, "In the Clubhouse" at the 2007

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[249] Brinkley, "'Women Built This Castle': An in-Depth Look at Sexism in Ya." 1.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Corbett, "Ya Debut Gets Six-Figure Deal, Sold to 16 Territories and Jerry Bruckheimer," 1.

American Library Association conference.[253] His discomfort at being visually objectified and marginalized parallels the experiences of women authors who are asked to have makeovers for their bio pictures to garner reader interest, and who have been objectified (and sometimes assaulted) by men within the publishing community. Lipsyte does not acknowledge that his experience coincided with the temporary rise of the *Twilight* series, nor that he has been honored with the Margaret A. Edwards award for a significant and lasting contribution to YAL. He also ignores the fact that his own success was built upon his reputation as a sports columnist for *The New York Times*.[254] His success as a sportswriter and subsequent transition to YAL was a path unavailable to women writers of his era. Similarly, Bergstrom misrepresents the history of the marginalization and suppression of women's writing when he says that he published as S. Bergstrom as a "largely superficial attempt to disguise my gender. Since I'm writing about a female protagonist, I think it might lend me more credibility if I left my own gender ambiguous. This is precisely what S.E. Hinton and J.K. Rowling did, and for precisely the same reasons."[255] He is either unaware, or ignores the fact that Hinton's publisher told her to disguise her gender in order to be taken seriously.[256] He seems unaware that for hundreds of years women writers have hidden their gender not because they wrote characters of the opposite sex, but because women have had difficult getting read and published in a male-dominated publishing industry.

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[253] Lipsyte, "Boys and Reading: Is There Any Hope? ."

[254] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 29.

[255] Scott Bergstrom, 2014.

[256] Jensen, "A Censored History of Ladies in Ya Fiction".

The erasure of women's contributions to YAL as a means of elevating the contributions of men writers is so common that it has come to be known as the "John Green phenomenon." John Green skyrocketed to YA literary appreciation with his novel *Looking for Alaska* (2005) and has since maintained his popularity with *The Fault in Our Stars* (2012) and has been hailed for bringing literary realism to young adult literature. As Kelly Jensen points out, he has since become "a tool of power and force in the YA world. When mainstream writers talk about YA, his name is held with affection and as an ideal to which others should aspire."[257] Plenty of groundbreaking women writers were writing literary realism in YA long before John Green; Laurie Halse Anderson was praised for similar reasons. The John Green phenomenon is one way that women's writing continues to be suppressed in the twenty-first century. In the genre built by and run by women, women's' writing is discounted by "suppressing context: writing is separated experience, women writers are separated from their tradition and each other" and this allows men to lay claim to aesthetic accomplishments as though they alone made significant strides to make YAL more literary.[258]

Part of the appeal for men writers may be that young adult literature is gaining respectability. As MFA in writing for children and teens proliferate, young graduates from these programs often head directly to the YA genre.[259] YAL is accruing cultural capital, which may give men reasons to both denigrate the genre and fight for a space within it. Author Nova Ren Suma notes that "As the years pass, I've noticed that the

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[257] qtd. in Brinkley, "'Women Built This Castle': An in-Depth Look at Sexism in Ya." 3.
[258] Russ, *How to Suppress Women's Writing*, 118.
[259] Patty Campbell, "Drowning in Success," *Horn Book Magazine* 82, no. 1 (2006): 63.

stigma in the author community about writing YA that comes from adult literary circles is starting to lesson and minds are being opened to the great literature coming from our field."[260] Within publishing, "editors have observed that that the recognition of literary excellence by the Printz has given publishers incentive to seek out more high-quality young adult novels."[261] Joseph Monti, children's book buyer for Barnes and Noble, mentioned in a 2006 interview with *The Horn Book Guide* that literary awards are important to librarians and parents, but word of mouth is the most crucial means of promoting commercial success.[262] Additionally, YAL has been gaining a "new dignity" with "the invasion of young adult literature by well-known authors of books for adults. Alice Hoffman, Joyce Carol Oates, Carl Hiassen, and Isabel Allende, among others."[263]

YAL may also be more attractive because it addresses issues that are not addressed as frequently or innovatively in adult literary fiction, particularly in relation to diversity, mental illness and experimentation with form and genre.[264] For many authors, it is becoming the space of literary experimentation. In a study of 370 of the most notable books (award winners, young adult favorites and bestsellers) from 1999-2005, Koss and Teale conducted a close study of 59 representative texts, and found an increasing tendency toward stylistic complexity. They observed an " increasing experimentation with point of view, the inclusion of unique organizational features, and the embedding of

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[260] qtd. in Shelley M. Diaz, "Ya's Long Reach: Its Popularity Is Exploding, but Are Teens Getting Shut Out?," *School Library Journal* 61, no. 11 (2015): 24.

[261] Campbell, "Drowning in Success," 63.

[262] Ibid.

[263] Ibid., 64.

[264] Diaz, "Ya's Long Reach: Its Popularity Is Exploding, but Are Teens Getting Shut Out?," 24.

digital communication technologies into narrative texts."[265] They also found that the new bildungsroman "differed from the traditional coming-of-age story as they focused on the main character grappling with events of everyday life, rather than a singular, major transforming event."[266] Together, these descriptions sound more like literary fiction than the narrative style expected of young adult literature. As the cultural capital associated with young adult literature changes, perception of the gender hierarchy within the genre is shifting.

Ultimately, both the feminist stance that views YAL as a safe, productive space for women writers and girl readers, and the post-feminist stance that claims YAL is unfairly skewed towards women and girls, rely on several assumptions: first, that women dominate the means of distribution as teachers and librarians, thus helping to create the market and readers. Second, women dominate the production of YAL at the publishing level, and thus make decisions that benefit women writers and girl readers to the detriment of men authors and boy readers. Third, that consequently boys don't read, and thus girls are the majority of YAL consumers. But in actuality, while women do make up a majority of the educators and consumers of young adult literature, the texts they write, create and sell show gender parity rather than a bias towards women writers. Examining each of these assumptions in turn either overturns such assumptions or shows more gender parity than inequality.

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[265] Melanie D. Koss and William H. Teale, "What's Happening in Ya Literature? Trends in Books for Adolescents: This Analysis of Young Adult Literature Reports on Trends Found in the Genres, Descriptive Features, Subject Matters, and Writing Styles of Books That Can Help Teachers Select Reading Material for Their Students.(Report)," *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 52, no. 7 (2009): 564-65.

[266] Ibid., 567.

3.2 Gender Representation in Literacy/Literature Curriculum

The assumption that women dominate the teaching and library professions is rooted in a history of the gendered separation of work. As women gained access to education, teaching and librarianship were two of the areas to which they had professional access.[267] Historically, 97% of librarians have been women, in part because Progressive Era social programs focused on "female-intensive child welfare programs."[268] But this has not resulted in a bias towards women-centered curriculum. In his influential 1988 study of 488 public, catholic and independent schools, Arthur Applebee discovered that of the book-length works assigned in high schools, 81% of the texts were written by men, and 98% of the texts were written by white authors.[269] Despite feminist activist pushes to broaden the curriculum, the number of women authors represented increased only 2% from 1963-1988.[270] As part of the survey, Applebee asked teachers to list the top ten books chosen for curriculum. Harper Lee was the only woman author to make the list.[271] In recognizing that anthologies play a large role in teacher selections, Applebee conducted another study in 1990, and found that literature anthologies were listed as the most frequent source of reading material by 66% of teachers. In anthologies, women made up 21% of the selections, showing a more significant increase in women's representation since the 1963 study, predominantly in

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[267] Jenkins, "The History of Youth Services Librarianship: A Review of the Research Literature," 128.
[268] Ibid., 126.
[269] Arthur N. Applebee, "Stability and Change in the High-School Canon," *The English Journal* 81, no. 5 (1992): 27-28.
[270] Ibid., 28.
[271] Ibid., 27-28.

poetry and nonfiction.[272] Overall, in 1992, Applebee concluded that "Works by women still make up only 16% of the reading students are asked to do for their English courses…and works by nonwhite authors less than 7%.[273]

In 2006 Joyce Stallworth, et al. conducted a similar survey revealing a similar reliance on canonical texts written mostly by men. In this study, 142 English teachers in Alabama were asked to list the book-length works chosen for English curriculum from 2002-2004. Loraine Hansberry and Zora Neale Hurston joined Harper Lee in top ten most frequently mentioned authors, but the study ultimately concluded that teachers still relied on "classic" texts, though Americans such as Nathaniel Hawthorne replaced Shakespeare and other early British authors.[274] In Stallworth et al.'s study, only twelve of these teachers were men, and so it is women teachers who adhere to a mostly male literary canon. This pattern continues: in 2015, Naomi Watkins and Jonathan Ostenson surveyed 339 teachers in a Western State about the factors influencing their text selection under the new Common Core State Standards. In considering texts for curriculum, the study found that teachers who felt constrained when making curriculum decisions most frequently mentioned that "they felt pressure to teach canonical texts or were restricted by the set of texts available in the school."[275] In both cases, this may mean relying on texts written by male authors. Although women have dominated the educational and library professions,

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[272] Ibid., 30.

[273] Ibid., 32.

[274] B. Joyce Stallworth, Louel Gibbons, and Leigh Fauber, "It's Not on the List: An Exploration of Teachers' Perspectives on Using Multicultural Literature," *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 49, no. 6 (2006): 482-83.

[275] This reflects comments made by teachers in both Applebee and Stallworth's studies as well. Naomi Watkins and Jonathan Ostenson, "Navigating the Text Selection Gauntlet: Exploring Factors That Influence English Teachers' Choices," *English Education* 47, no. 3 (2015): 256.

they have not demonstrated a bias in providing books for girls over providing "boy" books to children of any gender. In fact, girls have had less access to representation of girls' experiences in literature than boys have[276].

The assumption that crossover reading is acceptable for girls but not boys underlies the curriculur focus on stories by and about men. In "'As the twig is bent…': Gender and Childhood Reading, Elizabeth Segel traces these assumptions about gendered reading practices back to the nineteenth century, when gendered social roles became polarized alongside the expansion of industrialization and colonization. Both publishers and educators began to promote different texts for boys and girls that communicated different socializing messages.[277] Segel argues that though children's literature was created, marketed and sold according to the gender of the intended reader, gendered crossover reading was common, as evidenced in studies of reading and writing in the Victorian era as well as the journals of famous authors.[278] According to Segel, boys were shamed into hiding their crossover reading habits, but girls were allowed to express interest in reading boys' books.

According to Segel, these attitudes toward gendered crossover reading made their way into schools in the 1920s. At this time, a rash of unreliable studies made conclusions about children's gendered reading tastes, but the most methodologically sound studies, conducted by George Norvell, concluded that "sex is so dominant and ever-present a force in determining young people's reading choices that…if adolescents are to be

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[276] With the new focus on STEM education, research is emerging about gender representation in math and science textbooks. See`

[277] Segel, "'As the Twig Is Bent…': Gender and Childhood Reading," 170.

[278] Ibid., 175-76.

provided with satisfactory materials, the reading interests of boys and of girls must receive separate consideration…for reading in common, only materials well liked by both boys and girls should be used."[279] Because "boys will not tolerate books primarily about women, [and] girls generally read books about men with satisfaction," Norvell concludes that stories about men should be given preference as a means of satisfying the reading interests of both sexes.[280] As Segel points out, it is the denigration of women and of women's fiction that leads to a preference for men's stories, a fact that is ignored when studies naturalize reading preferences. Segel's study shows a consistent effort to maintain gendered reading in curriculum from the 1920s into the 1980s. Some studies have found more gender parity in the production of books featuring girl and boy protagonists after feminist activism in the sixties and seventies. However, Segel contends that even after feminist gains teacher textbooks justify male-centered curriculum based on assumptions that girls are more adept and willing to engage in gendered crossover reading.[281] These assumptions make their way into children's media, which continues to "show a relative absence of women and girls in titles and as central characters."[282] In 2011, Janice McCabe et al. studied 5, 618 children's books published throughout the 20th century, and found that "Compared to females, male characters are represented nearly twice as often in

[279] qtd. in ibid., 179.

[280] qtd. in ibid.

[281] Ibid., 180.

[282] Janice McCabe et al., "Gender in Twentieth-Century Children's Books: Patterns of Disparity in Titles and Central Characters," *Gender & Society* 25, no. 2 (2011): 198.

titles and 1.6 times as often as central characters." The disparity does decrease for books published between 1970-2000, except when books feature animal characters.[283]

Assumptions about crossover gender reading habits continue today in the "'moral panic' concerning boys' literacy" caused by several reports that girls consistently outperform boys on reading tests. This gender reading gap was reported in a 2009 study of the National Assessment of Education Progress, and supported by the Programme for International Student Assessment as well as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries.[284] In response to this data, many arguments about improving boys' literacy have claimed that "boys are being disadvantaged by the feminized teaching styles and resources of female teachers" in which teachers fail "to accommodate boys' interests and learning styles."[285] Suggested solutions have included finding more male teachers to act as role models, bringing in male community figures and authors to discuss books, changing the methods of valuing literature (i.e. Reading for information rather than to "relate" to characters), and changing the curriculum to include more texts that appeal to boys.[286] As Watson et al. point out in their analysis of the discourse surrounding boys' literacy, all of these remedies focus on reclaiming "schooling as a masculine domain and suggest pedagogical rather than structural reforms"[287] to solve problems that result in a "reluctance to participate in English…which stems from an understanding of

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[283] It should be noted that this study does not consider young adult literature, but is still relevant in that it reflects on assumptions about gendered reading habits. Ibid., 197, 217.

[284] It is important to note that these last two sources take a global view on gendered test performance. Anne Watson, Michael Kehler, and Wayne Martino, "The Problem of Boys' Literacy Underachievement: Raising Some Questions," *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 53, no. 5 (2010): 456.

[285] See Anne Watson, et. al for a list of resources regarding the boys' literacy debate. Ibid., 358.

[286] Ibid. Donna Lester Taylor, ""Not Just Boring Stories": Reconsidering the Gender Gap for Boys," ibid.48, no. 4 (2004).

[287] ""Not Just Boring Stories": Reconsidering the Gender Gap for Boys," 356.

what is acceptable masculine behavior." Watson et al. suggest that masculine behavior needs to be "challenged and deconstructed if we hope to improve boys' achievement."[288] Underlying each of these suggestions is the idea that girls will adapt to texts and strategies used to improve boys' literacy, whereas testing results supposedly show that boys cannot crossover into reading in a mode that favors girls' literacy. This is not because of the gender of characters or authors in the books themselves, as curriculum studies show that curriculum has been, and continues to be skewed towards boys. As many scholars, publishers and educators acknowledge, there is a gap between young adult reading in school, and the texts young adults read outside of the classroom.

3.3 Gendered Book-Buying Habits

In considering book-buying and reading habits as reported by the book selling industry, I now turn to market research reports. Simba Information Inc. produces an annual market report, *Children's Publishing Market Forecast* that considers nationally recognized studies on reading, information on the quantity of books published within the Children's/YA category gathered from Bowker's exhaustive *Books in Print* database, nationally prominent Bestseller lists, their own small surveys of bookstores, as well as large-scale surveys of readers and book buyers conducted by other marketing research firms. I have chosen to focus on Simba's information because they have access to private market studies, and their annual report is one of the few to concentrate exclusively on Children's/YA publishing. Most importantly, Simba has conducted a survey specifically

[288] Ibid., 357.

on gendered book buying habits that directly relates to the issues discussed throughout this chapter.

Because *Harry Potter* resulted in a re-structuring of the publishing and book selling markets, this portion of the chapter will focus on children's/YA book-buying habits taking place in the early twenty-first century, particularly during the time period of Simba's gendered reading survey, from 2007 until their most recent report in 2013. It is also worth mentioning that Simba's gender demographic studies align with the release of Stephanie Meyers's *Twilight* series, which may skew demographics temporarily towards a female market during the 2011-2012 season. Simba acknowledges this when appropriate. Finally, it is important to note, as Simba Information does in its discussion of methodology for each annual report, that "The book industry cannot look at itself or at its future by simply studying unit sales or parsing through focus group-based analysis, but by understanding that…the activities of 'buying' and 'reading' need to be studied separately."[289]

Keeping in mind the separation between the acts of "buying" and "reading," studies about gender bias in the YA publishing industry must connect gendered literacy concerns with studies about gendered book buying habits. In the 2004 *Reading at Risk* study conducted by The National Endowment of the Arts, the NEA reported that women and girls read more than men and boys. The study surveyed 17,000 people between 1982 and 2002,[290] and found that 55.1% of women reported reading literature in 2002

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[289] Michael Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2013," in *Children's Publishing Market Forecast*, ed. Simba Information (Stamford, CT2013), 7.

[290] Warren Pawlowski and editors of Simba Information Michael Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2010,"ibid. (2009), 20.

compared to 37.6% of men.[291] These numbers parallel studies about book buying habits. In 2009, Experian Simmons Market Research found that "65.7% of women had purchased at least one book over the previous six months compared to 45.3% of men."[292] This survey is considered an accurate representation of the book buying market, as it surveyed 25,000 adults in the U.S. and was not limited to known book buyers.[293] Simba found a correlation between the NEA, Simmons' gendered demographics of book buyers, and Simba's own survey of consumers purchasing children's/YA books.[294] As of 2013, Simba has collected five years of studies that survey independent bookstores about the most common book buyers at their stores. Bookstores are an important source of data given that 41% of children in Scholastic's *Kids and Family Reading Report* (2006) "cited bookstores as a source to find out which books to read for fun."[295] Ultimately, Simba found "remarkable consistency from each year," indicating that "among independents, parents who are bringing their kids into the store with them was the most popular group, followed by adults buying books for children who were not in the store with them…[and] while adults who enter a bookstore to buy a children's/YA title to read for themselves is certainly not the most popular group, it is happening with some frequency."[296] Overall, this means that the most frequent buyers of children's books are adults; while this is not

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[291] Ibid., 13.

[292] Ibid., 14.

[293] Ibid., 9.

[294] Because market research generally groups children's and young adult literature together, I have to refer to a combined genre of literature in discussing consumer habits. This is one of the limitations of this chapter's conclusions in that gendered reading and book-buying may apply to the combination of chidlren's and YAL rather than YAL alone.

[295] Michael Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2010," 108.

[296] Michael Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2013,"ibid. (2013), 8.

unexpected, it does lend validity to the argument that gendered reading habits may be influenced by adults, who control children's access to reading material.

Simba fount that 65.1% of booksellers (out of 84) reported that the mother was the most frequent adult buyer of children's books in 2013.[297] Although independent booksellers make up roughly 10% of the overall book market, this data is supported by the large Experian Simmons survey mentioned earlier, which found that over a five-year period, women and men's book-buying habits were relatively stable. Roughly 40% of women who had bought books during the previous year reportedly purchased a children's book, while close to 20% of men bought children's books as part of their yearly purchases. This gender disparity was also present when grandparents purchased books for children.[298] According to Simba, these figures demonstrate "how the book industry shapes itself: fewer men buy books for their kids (namely, sons) and said sons often group up to not be heavy buyers either."[299]

However, given that 35% of the children in Scholastic's study claimed that they are allowed to choose their own books, it is also important to look at young adult book buying behavior. As part of Simba's independent bookstore survey, the company "Asked [booksellers] to describe the gender mix of children's/YA book buyers at their stores."[300] This study was conducted each year between 2007-2014 using the same methodology from year to year. As can be seen in Figure 1, from 2007-2012[301] the majority of

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[297] Ibid., 9.

[298] Ibid., 12-14.

[299] Ibid., 16.

[300] Warren Pawlowski and editors of Simba Information Michael Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2010,"ibid. (2009), 13.

[301] This data is not included in the 2013 Simba report.

booksellers (45.5%) claim that girls make up slightly more than half of book buyers, and the next largest group of booksellers (25.7%) say that book buyers are "About evenly split" between girls and boys." 22.8% of booksellers said that far more girls bought books than boys within the last year.

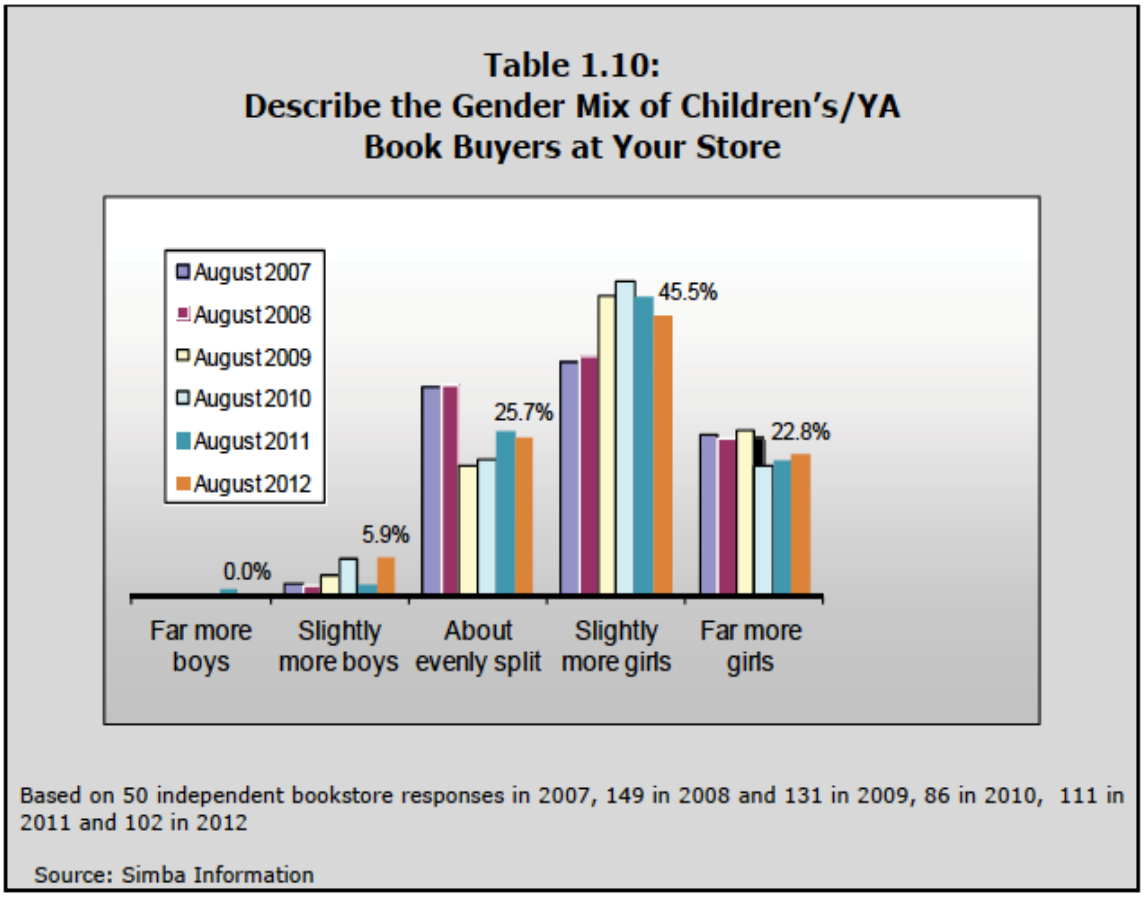

Figure 3.1. Book Consumers by Gender over 5 years of Simba Independent Bookstore Surveys.

These results show that overall the majority of booksellers claim that book buying is either evenly split between genders or that slightly more girls buy books. Simba acknowledges that varying sample size makes it difficult to compare these surveys from year to year, but claims that the "consistency in the answers is striking" and lends the

survey validity.[302] Another limitation of the study is its reliance on the memory of booksellers to estimate gender disparity. It is possible that booksellers may not have carefully observed gendered book buying throughout the year, or that their own biases about mothers and girls buying books could influence their responses. Nonetheless, there is little publicly available data on gendered book buying habits, and the Simba report is consistent in its methods and results. In book buying, it does seem that women and girls purchase more books, and are possibly reading more YA than their male counterparts. While women and girls may be spending more on books, this does not necessarily mean that a female readership leads to increased cultural capital and commercial success for women as authors.

3.4 Gender and Literary Recognition

As discussed earlier, there is a historical precedent for looking at gender bias in reviews as a major indication of gender equality in publishing, and examining gender in YAL review and award venues can uncover the gendered politics of publishing in the genre. This chapter turns to the first VIDA children's literature count for an analysis of gendered representation of authors in the field of children's and YAL. In their 2013 Gender Count of the number of women/men reviewed or given awards in major review venues, VIDA also conducted a count in children's literature. Researchers limited their search to fiction, the subgenre of children's literature that is awarded the most respect and prestige within the industry. VIDA Children's Literature Count differs from the adult literature count methodologically in the types of texts counted. Because "recognition and

[302] Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2013," 13.

respect comes primarily from publishing a novel, a book-length work of non-fiction, or a picture book," the count focused on book-length works only. The count included ten of the most prestigious awards, and seven of the most prestigious Best Books lists because "these categories directly results in increased book sales, as well as publicity in the form of speaking engagements and exposure at national conferences."[303] The VIDA count is particularly important for drawing parallels between the gendered dynamics of literary fiction and those of young adult literature, since VIDA conducts separate counts for these genres, and operates under an understanding that "Young adult and children's publishing is not only friendly to women writers—it is often considered to be female-led, since women occupy the majority of jobs in the industry as authors, editors, agents and more."[304]

As mentioned by Simba, the influence of children's/YA literary prizes and bestseller lists has a large impact on the critical and commercial success of a work, and thus the 2013 VIDA children's literature count examines ten of the most prestigious awards over a 5-year period (2008-2013) as well as seven of the most influential bestseller lists of 2013. To determine the gender of authors, VIDA sorts according to gendered names (Jessica, Michael, etc.) that are considered "nearly certain to be allocated to a specific gender."[305] VIDA conducts further research on names that are considered "gender-ambiguous" by searching online for the pronouns associated with each author.

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[303] Kekla Magoon, "Young Adult and Children's Literature: Do Women Truly Dominate," VIDA: Women in Literary Arts, http://www.vidaweb.org/vida-count-childrens-literature/.

[304] Ibid.

[305] "Vida: Women in Literary Arts".

There have been no instances when gender has not been determined. Each source is counted by five people to ensure an accurate count.[306]

In considering the importance of the VIDA Count, I limit my discussion to VIDA counts that specifically reference Young Adult Literature in order to better reflect the age group and gendered reading assumptions discussed above. My conclusions do not include awards and lists that apply solely to "young readers," children's or picture books. However, I am including the combined children's/YA literature counts in the VIDA graphs below for transparency.

In some of the most prestigious book lists the VIDA Children's Literature count shows almost exact gender parity, especially given that the list covered a five-year period and there must be an uneven number of winners for single-winner prizes. The Printz Award, the most prestigious literary award within young adult literature, shows almost exact gender parity in its inclusion of authors.[307] According to Figure 2, the five-year total of finalists and winners consisted of 12 women writers and 13 men. There were slightly more women grand prizewinners, and the finalists were equally represented in terms of gender. As can be seen in Figure 3, the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prizes in Young Adult Literature, gender parity was also very close: 12 women to 14 men were represented over a five-year period. Women were clearly dominant as grand prizewinners, and men were more dominant as finalists.[308]

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[306] Ibid.

[307] The creation of this award and a discussion of its literary distinction can be found in Chapter One.

[308] "Vida: Women in Literary Arts".

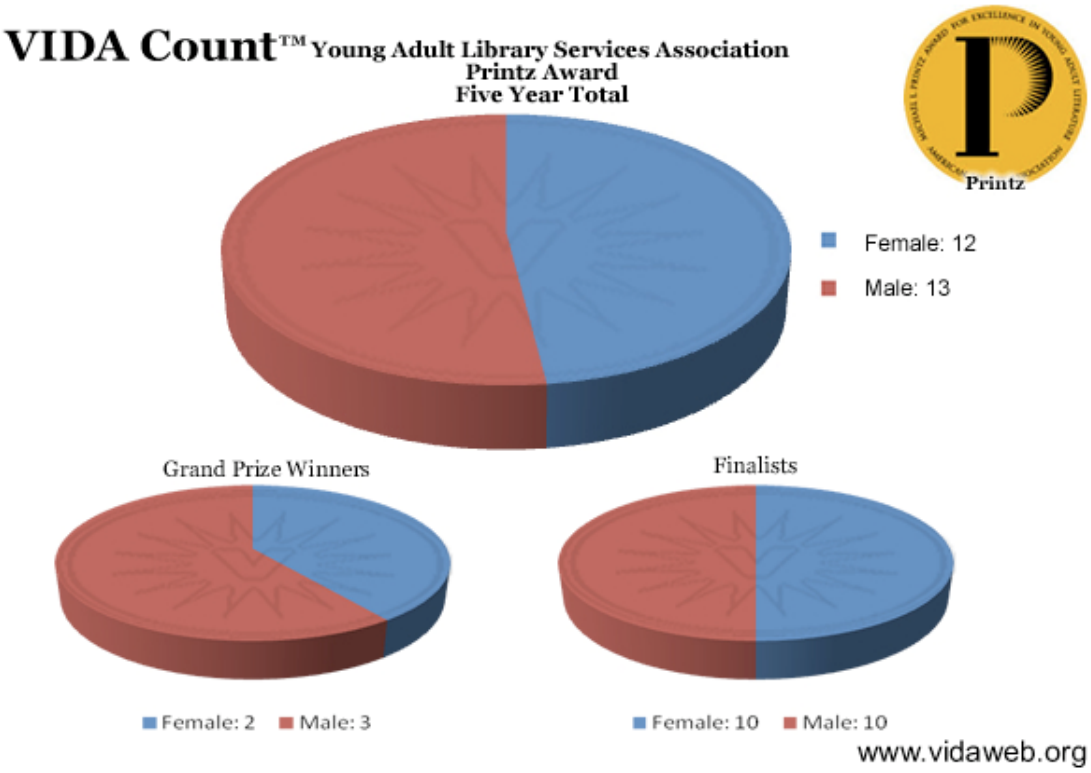

Figure 3.2. Printz Awards by author's gender (2008-2013).

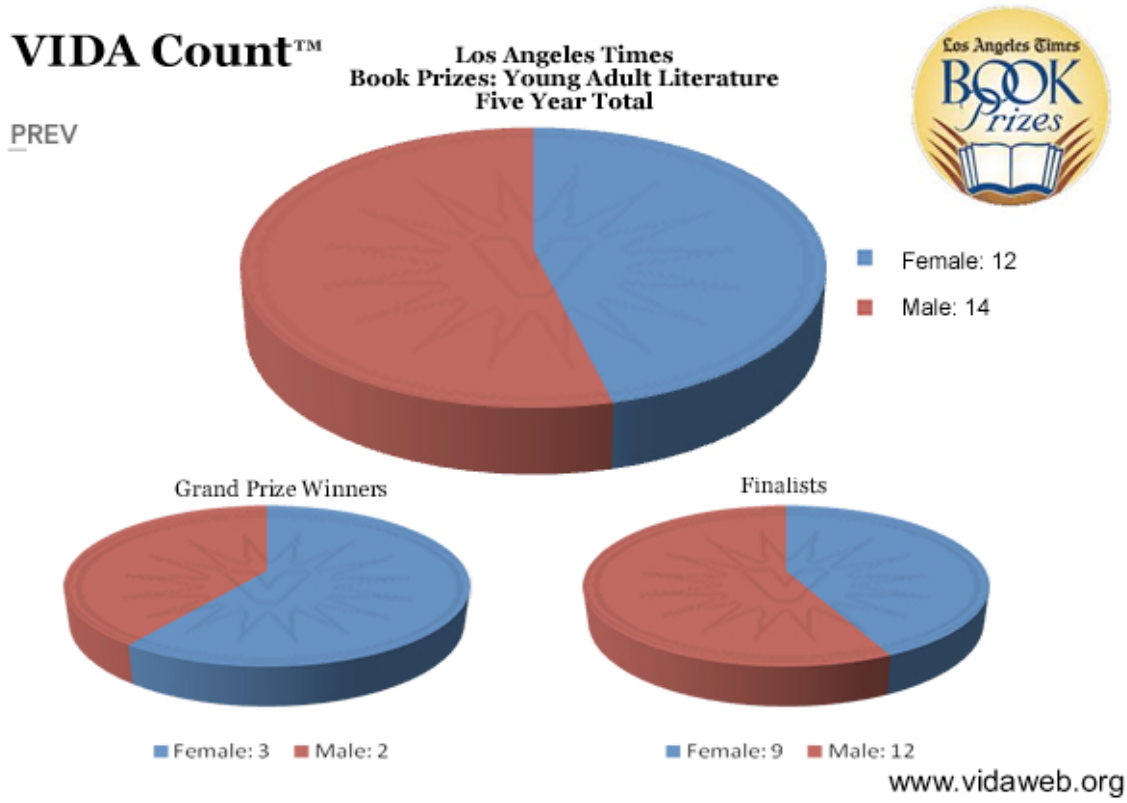

Figure 3.3. Los Angeles Times Awards by author's gender (2008-2013).

In two Best Books lists women outnumbered men at the middle grades level, but teen books showed equal representation between men and women. *The New York Times* Notable Children's Books List had a ratio of four women to three men in the teen list, but twice as many women in middle grades books, as represented in Figure 4. The *Booklist* Editor's Choice awarded an even number of books to women and men in the teen category, but women won all of the awards at the middle grade level (Figure 5).[309]

[309] Ibid.

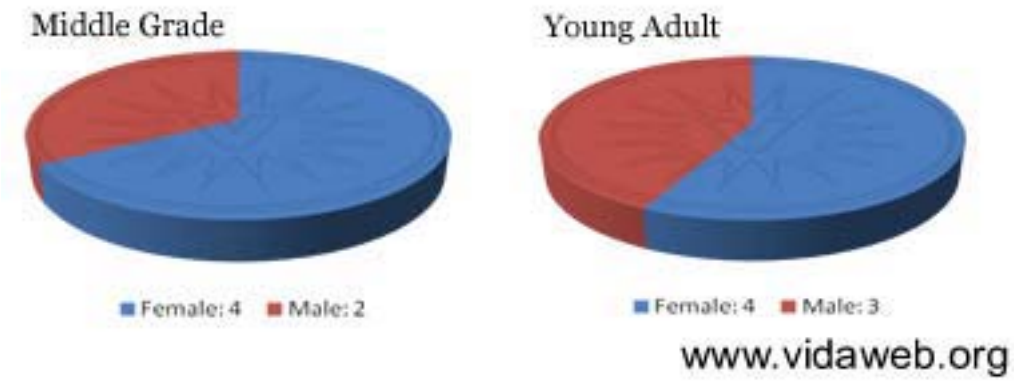

Figure 3.4. New York Times Notable Children's Books by author's gender (2008-2013).

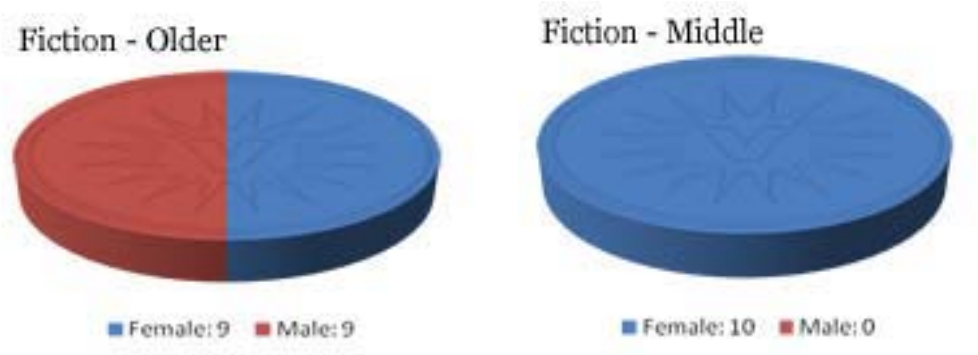

Figure 3.5. Booklist Editor's Choice Awards by author's gender (2008-2013).

Some of the lists and awards were in fact skewed more towards women writers. The National Book Award featured 18 women compared to 12 men over a five year period and had a distinctly higher number of women represented as grand prize winners and finalists, as shown in Figure 6. The Bankstreet Best Children's Books of the Year, curated by the Bankstreet school of Education, has a rather large list of best books, and awarded over twice as many to women(Figure 7). The highest gender disparity favoring women was found in the American Library Association Awards as can be seen in Figure 8.. The YALSA William C. Morris YA Debut Award, named 24 women and only 2 men

award winners in a five-year period (Figure . And in the ALA Notable Children's Book List, 13 women and only two men made the list. Books for middle readers were slightly more equitable, with 18 women and 10 men.[310]

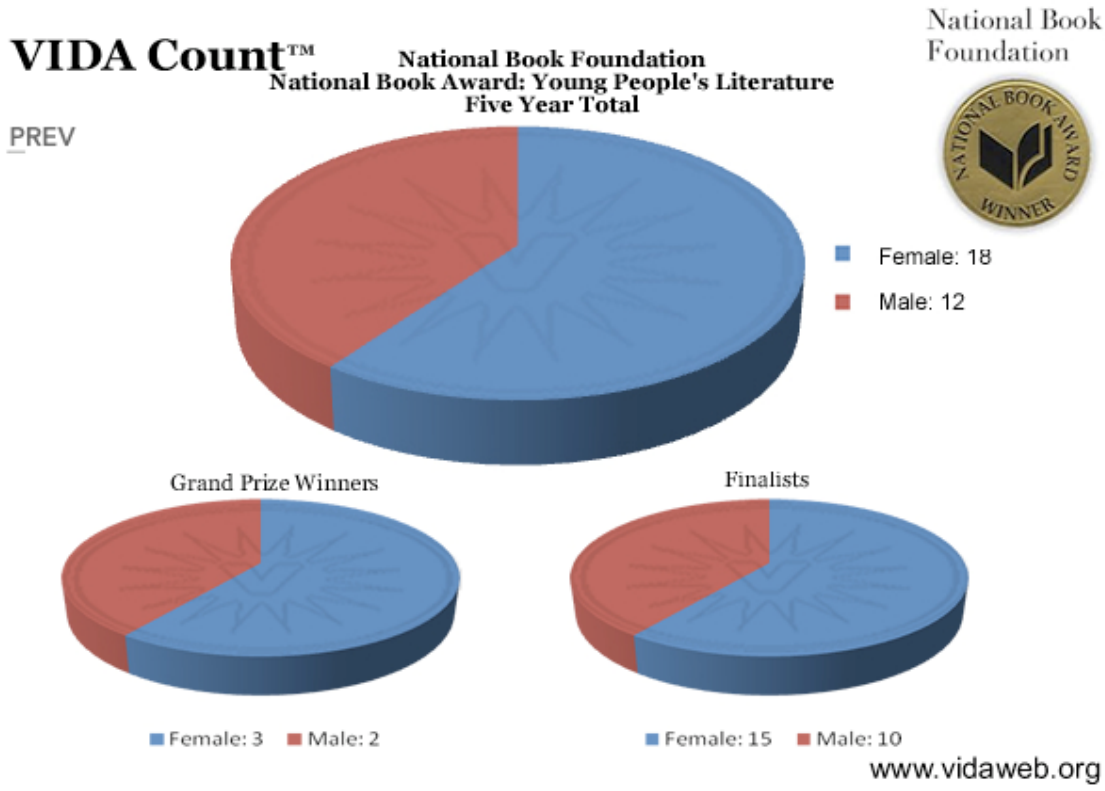

Figure 3.6. National Book Foundation Award in Young People's Literature according to author's gender (2008-2013).

[310] Ibid.

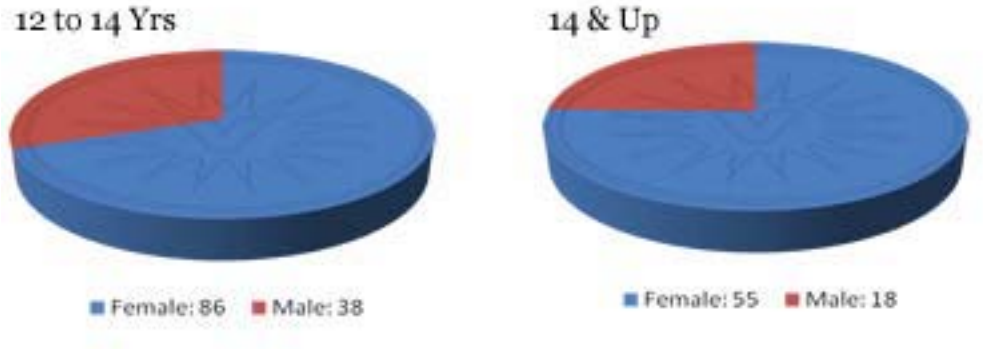

Figure 3.7. Bankstreet Books Best Children's Book Awards (2008-2013).

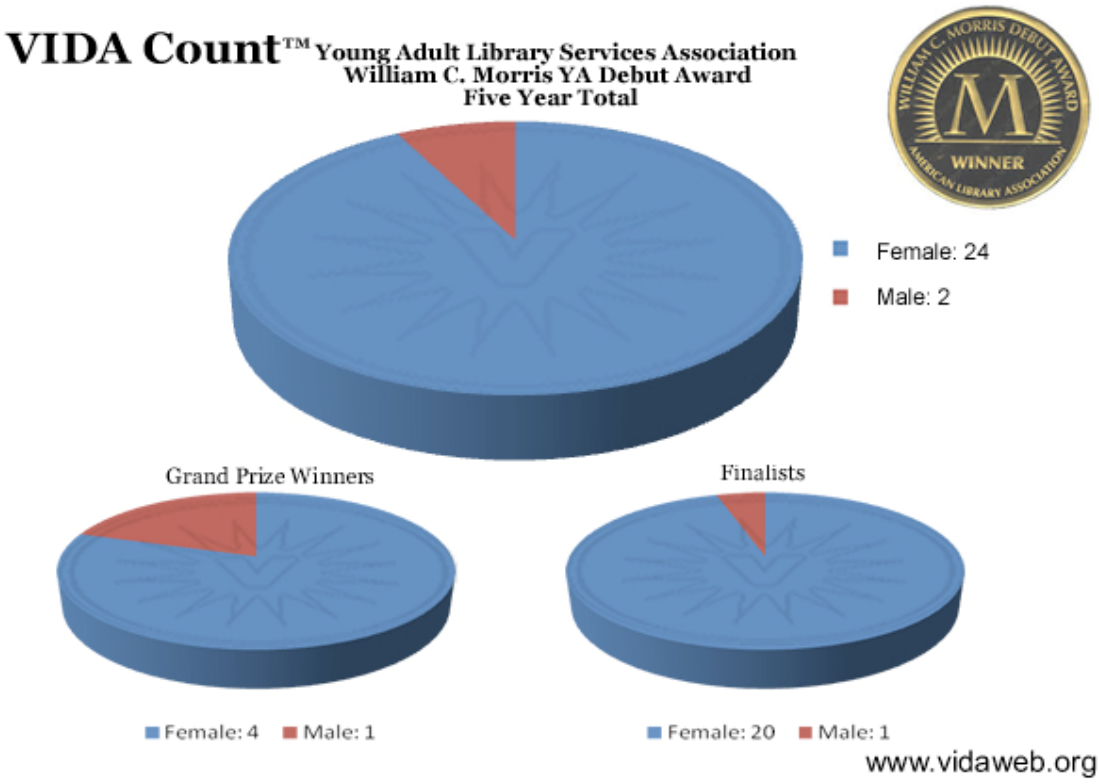

Figure 3.8. William C. Morris Award by author's gender (2008-2013).

There was one area in which men dominated the awards. The Stonewall award for LGBTQ young adult literature showed gender parity at the finalist level, but according to

Figure 9, all of the grand prize winners were men.[311] In the two other subgenre awards, the Mystery Writers Guild Edgars Award and the ALA Schneider Family Award for books about disability, there was gender parity at the prize winner level (Figures 10).

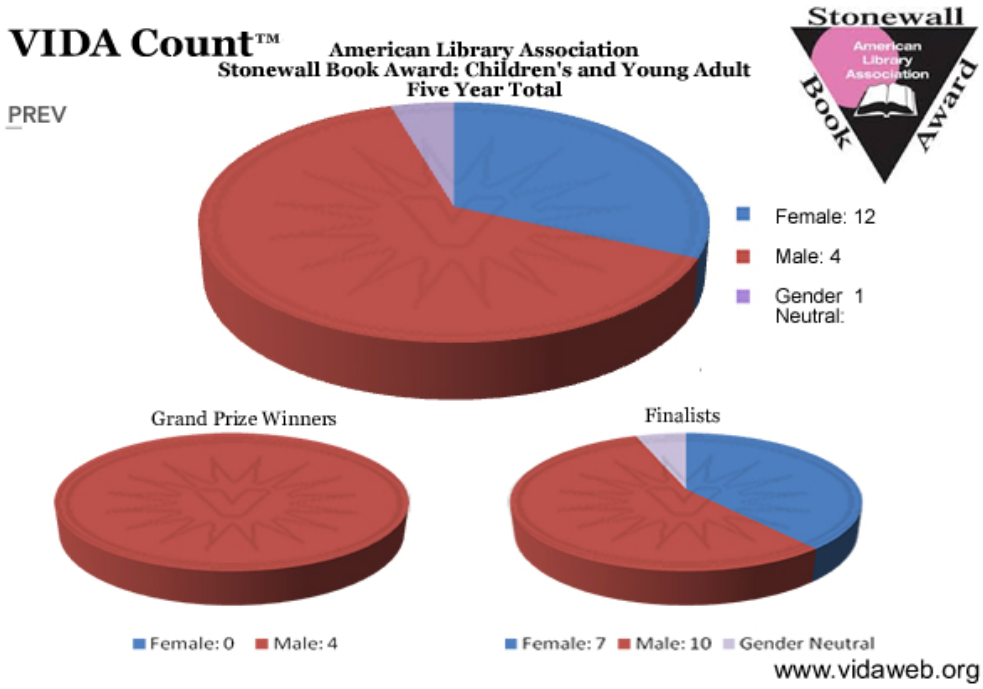

Figure 3.9. Stonewall Book Award by author's gender (2008-2013).

[311] This was the only category with gender to feature gender neutral authos, ibid.

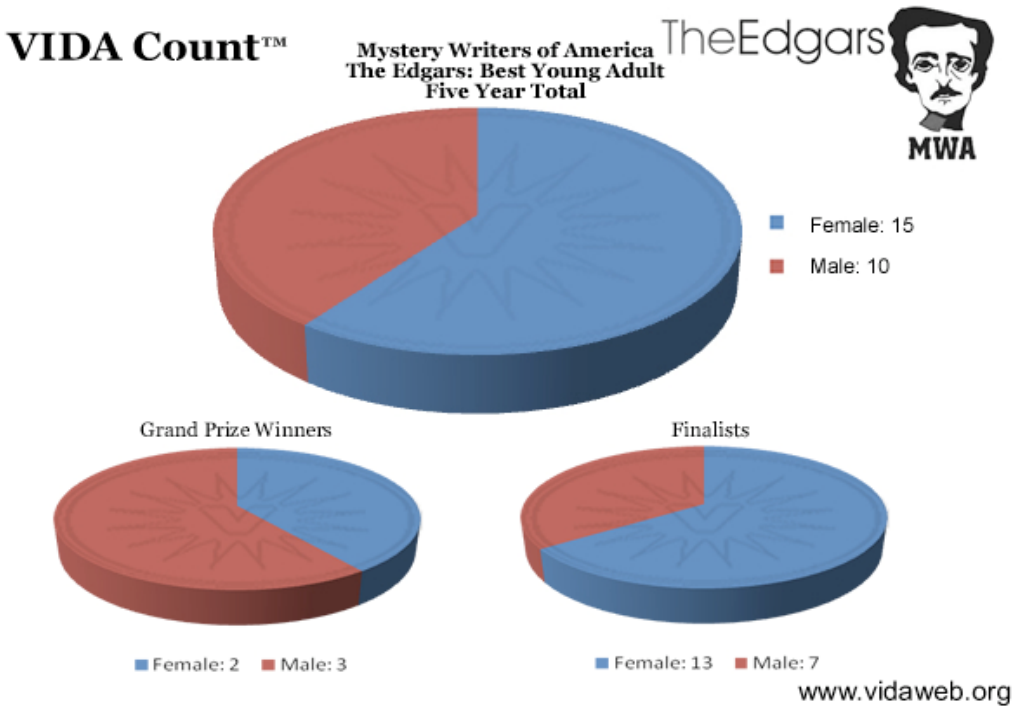

Figure 3.10. Edgar Award for Best Young Adult Book by author's gender (2008-2013).

Ultimately, the awards and booklists in the VIDA count show a surprising amount of gender parity, especially among the most prestigious award and list venues. In comparison to the VIDA counts for adult literary genres (poetry, fiction, non-fiction), Young Adult Literature is much more open to women authors than the adult literary genres.

3.5 Gender and Commercial Success: Examining the Bestseller Lists

The dominant role of women and girls as book buyers, and the mistaken assumption that women writers get more recognition for their work within YAL has led to concern among men writers and critics that the Children's/YAL market favors stories about girls. However, given that the gender disparity in education and libraries did not

reflect a woman-centered curriculum, it is also necessary to look at the gendered content of the books actually being purchased. An excellent method of analysis would be to examine the gender of protagonists within YA texts found in compiled bestseller lists such as those offered in Simba's reports from 2007-2012. Simba Information collects bestseller data from *USA Today, New York Times* and *Publishers Weekly,* "assigning a composite rating and viewing historical information."[312] These bestseller lists are important given that large superstore retailers such as Wal-Mart and Target are make up an increasingly large portion of book retail, and "big box stores and grocery stores don't have a lot of room for books, they almost always stock frontlist or otherwise "current" books."[313] To select these books, they rely heavily on bestseller lists.[314] According to Simba, a review of bestselling titles "provides a valuable context pertaining to what consumers are broadly demanding."[315]

Bestseller lists are also an important means of analyzing the commercial success of authors and the perception of YAL as a woman's industry. Roughly "2% of published books make it to these lists," and an appearance, especially in the *New York Times* list, can directly effect on author reputation and the distribution possibilities for a book.[316] Because these numbers represent a small number of authors, they cannot be seen as representative of the number or demographics of all books published, but they can be seen as representative of the most widely publicized books, and as a source of

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[312] Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2013," 45.

[313] Warren Pawlowski and editors of Simba Information Michael Norris, "Children's Publishing Market Forecast 2010,"ibid. (2009), 78.

[314] Ibid., 46.

[315] Ibid., 45.

[316] Ibid.

information to contextualize the public conversations about young adult literature. Unfortunately, in Simba Information's compilation of bestseller data, they list titles and the names of authors, but do not track information about the gender of authors or the gendered appeal of books as girls' or boys' literature. But it is possible to examine which books are accruing cultural capital through literary awards and revered "best of" lists that help educate teachers, librarians and parents about emerging young adult novels. Kelly Jensen, former youth services librarian, and YA critic whose work has been published in VOYA, *The Horn Book, and School Library Journal* counted gender representation in "best of" lists according to character point-of-view. She counted all YA books listed as "best of" in *Kirkus' Reviews, Horn Book, School Library Journal, Publishers Weekly*, and occasional mentions in *Library Journal.*[317] This study was limited to the period from 2013-2014, and so it shows a limited amount of data. In 2013, Jensen found that "of female and male main characters in YA fiction was almost 50/50. Female voices came ahead only slightly, with 53% of the titles. For a year when there were far more female authors than there were male authors, it can't be said male voices were underrepresented in the books at all."[318] 2014 showed more of a skew towards female characters when books featuring multiple protagonists were excluded. However, if multiple protagonists books are included, gender parity is much closer. Jensen's overall results are displayed in Figure 11.

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[317] Kelly Jensen, ""Best of Ya" Lists by the Numbers: 2011-2014 Stats, Comparisons, and Thoughts," Stacked Books.org, http://stackedbooks.org/2014/12/best-of-ya-lists-by-numbers-2011-2014.html.

[318] Ibid.

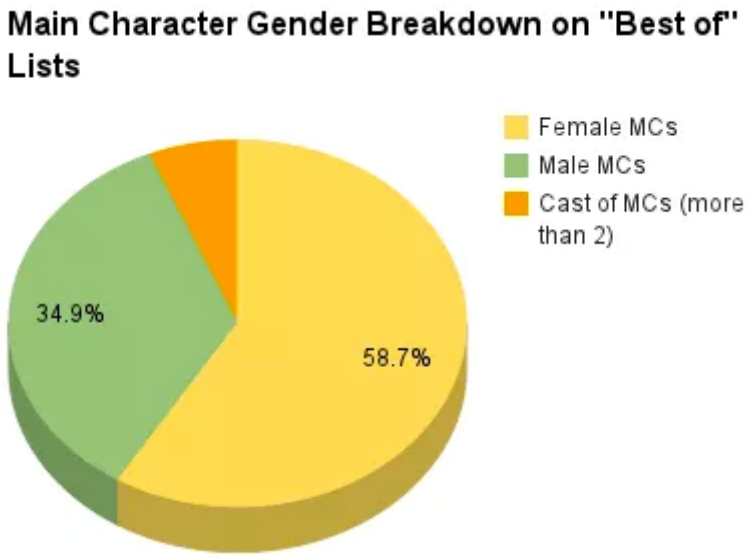

Figure 3.11. Gender representation of protagonists in Award Lists and Recommendations, according to Jensen's study.

While this data is limited and cannot be taken as thoroughly representative, it does help contextualize which books are being recommended to parents, librarians and educators. A similar study would need to be done on bestseller lists in order to determine whether the gender of the book buyer correlates to a preference for stories based on characters of that gender (i.e. mothers buying books about girl protagonists).

3.6 Gender Parity in the Publishing Profession

Finally, one of the last assumptions supporting the backlash against women writers in young adult fiction is that women dominate access to the YAL publishing industry as agents, editors and decision makers within publishing companies. While there is no gender count of literary agents, *Publishers Weekly* does an annual survey of workers in the publishing industry, and in 2010 their survey results addressed gender disparity in

detail. *Publisher's Weekly* found that 85% of employees with less than three years experience (entry level) were women. After six years of experience in publishing, this falls to 82% of women. As employees gain more experience and positions of power they also approach gender parity. Women make up 74% of employees after 7-10 years, 64% after 11-20 years in the industry, and after 20 years, women make up 54% of the workforce and men make up 46%.[319] The *Publishers Weekly* report on the survey by Jim Milliot found that "the only area where men outnumber women is in management, where the highest paying jobs are found."[320] Milliot attributes the pay gap to the number of years spent on the job, noting that "men averaged nearly 17 years on the job compared to just over 11 years for women."[321] So the anxiety about women dominating the industry is really a concern over women's low-level dominance in the industry; one might ask what happens to encourage roughly 30% of women to leave the field while the 15% of men who begin the industry have longer careers and are more likely to end up in management. The survey also found that "on a position-by-position basis…in the overwhelming number of cases, men earned more than women. The positions where this did not hold true were at the highest levels in editorial and sales and marketing."[322] Interestingly, a follow-up article in *Publishers Weekly* by Rachael Deahl ignored the relatively balanced gender parity and reported only that the industry is 82-85% women. Misrepresentations

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[319] Jim Milliot, "A Sliver of a Silver Lining: With Houses on Firmer Financial Ground, Employees Hope for Better in 2010," *Publishers Weekly*, 2010/08/02/ 2010, 19.

[320] Ibid., 20.

[321] Ibid.

[322] Ibid.

such as this may explain the common assumption that women dominate the publishing industry.

The number of women within publishing also has important implications for broader statistics on the gender pay gap in the United States. Women in the survey reported making an average of $64,600 per year while men in the industry averaged $105,130, leading Deahl to conclude with a high number of women in this field "by default, it brings down the pay scale," which then turns men away from pursuing careers in publishing.[323] Rather than worry that women are not being paid enough, or that 15% of men rise through the ranks of power in the industry while 50% of the women leave, Deahl's comment blames women's participation in the industry for repelling men from the profession.

3.7 Conclusions

This chapter takes a first step in examining the gendered politics of publishing in young adult fiction by interrogating the commonly held that women control the means of YAL production and districution. This false assumption is perpetuated by authors, agents and publishers. But as Marc Aronson discovered early in his editorial career in YAL publishing, the industry "is prone to establishing 'rules' that authors editors, reviewers and librarians, treat as proven when their origins are murky, their validity tested only by personal anecdotes and [these rules] are rarely subject to public debate."[324] In examining gender parity in educational distribution, bookselling, and in the visibility of authors in

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[323] Rachel Deahl, "Where the Boys Are Not: Does the Lack of Men in Publishing Hurt the Industry?," ibid., 2010/09/20/, 3.

[324] Marc Aronson, "The Myths of Teenage Readers," *Publishing Research Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (2000): 9.

reviews and literary awards, this chapter provides the first step in establishing the real gender dynamics as compared to the unexamined presumptions that guide how people publish, market, and read young adult literature. Throughout the entire field of YAL, the assumption of gender disparity is close to gender parity. Where gender disparity exists, as in the case of teachers and librarians, the disparity does not favor women writers or readers. But there is further research to be done in examining the role gender plays in the distribution, reception and production of young adult literature.

Although women are more frequently distributors of YAL as teachers, this has not resulted in literature curriculum that underrepresents boys. In fact, the stories of boys and men still dominate the curriculum---when the curriculum closely sticks to the "classics." But in the last twenty years teachers have moved towards including more young adult literature in the classroom, and this may include more works by women authors and stories about girls. Whether there is more gender parity, or even a bias towards girls literature in young adult book selection for the classroom, it is important to consider that the pedagogical goals associated with using YAL in the classroom may still divide the "classics" from YAL along gendered lines. Many of the scholarly work on YAL concerns its pedagogical function as a means of appealing to young adult readers when classic texts may be too removed from the current social concerns of the adolescent reader. Ivy and Broaddus found in their 2001 survey of middle school reading habits that students want to choose their own reading and one quarter to one third of students mentioned the desire to read about people their own age.[325] Pam B. Cole's *Young Adult Literature in the*

[325] Gay Ivey and Karen Broaddus, ""Just Plain Reading": A Survey of What Makes Students Want to Read in Middle School Classrooms," *Reading Research Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2001).

21st Century (2009) argues that students who are turned off by classics will often return to reading via YAL. Groenke et al. suggest that YAL should be included in English curriculum as a means of opening up discussion about complex social issues such as racism, drug abuse, and war (29). Numerous other studies have argued for the use of young adult literature as a means of working with reluctant readers to promote literacy. While all of these are excellent reasons to include any text in class, voicing these pursposes of YAL can communicate to readers that young adult texts are not as important for classes, or that YAL is somehow tangential or remedial. If YAL continues to be seen as a girls' genre, then both girls and the books they read are viewed as less important and less mature than the subjects of "classic" literature.

Further research on gender parity might supplement the work begun by Applebee and Segel by focusing on gender parity in teacher textbooks advocating for the inclusion of YAL in the classroom. For instance, Alleen Pace Nilsen and Kenneth L. Donelson's *Literature for Today's Young Adults* (2011) is one of the most popular textbooks for teachers, and is currently in its eighth edition since 1987. This textbook is organized into chapters that briefly describe YAL history, summaries of YAL criticism, and discussions of popular subgenres within young adult literature (nonfiction, poetry, sports, etc.), as well as discussions about the value of using of YAL in schools and libraries.[326] A study of Nilsen and Donelson's texts across time, especially their "Honor List," which

[326] Pam B. Cole's *Young Adult Literature in the 21st Century* and Lukens and Cline's *A Critical Handbook for Young Adults* cover similar ground. *From Hinton to Hamlet* by Sarah K. Herz, Donald R. Gallo may also be a great source for analyzing the pedagogical approaches linking young adult literature to teaching the classics.

recommends titles for teachers might shed light on which texts are recommended to teachers and show how pedagogy focuses on the use of YAL in the classroom.

Further research might also expand on the VIDA count to look at the gendered dynamics of literary awards as compared to the commercial success of bestsellers. This chapter has shown close gender parity in the winners of YAL literary awards across awards and "best of" lists, with some disparity favoring both women and men. As literary distinction is mostly bestowed by adults, though some awards may consult young readers (such as YALSA), a count of gender parity in bestseller lists may better reflect which authors are garnering commercial success and being read by young adults. Given Simba's research, such a count may only represent the books bought by adults for children, this information may still have value in privileging the tastes of readers over the text selections of professional, adult reviewers. Simba's consolidated lists of all *New York Times* and *USA Today* Children's/YA bestsellers would allow for a count of the most popular young adult authors across an entire year, and can provide data dating back to the early 2000s. An examination of the content of bestsellers could also reveal whether the gender representation of authors matches the gender parity/disparity within the texts themselves, expanding on Kelly Jensen's gender research on the content of award winning YAL. While expanding research on numerical counts would more accurately establish the state of gender parity in the literary and commercial success of YAL authors, it may not necessarily reflect the way gender operates within the publishing industry.

Perhaps most importantly, more research needs to be done on the gendered practices in selecting authors and texts for publication. The research for this chapter has

included trade magazine editorials and interviews with literary agents, but these public discussions about selection practices do not address gendered reading practices utilized by agents and editors. If girls' stories are seen as more profitable and available to more girls and women when published as YAL, it is possible that agents and editors read the texts of women writers with an eye towards publishing a work as young adult literature rather than publishing girls' stories as literary fiction. Research on biased selection practices might include interviews with editors and agents on their selection practices, analysis of company policies/handbooks book selection, and interviews with women YA and crossover authors about their experiences in negotiating genre with agents and editors.

While the assumption that women writers are more successful in YAL may appear to allow women writers more access to publishing their work, it can limit their access to cultural capital by directing women away from literary fiction. As a consequence, the association of women with YAL infantilizes women writers and girl protagonists. If girls' stories are located only in the teen section of a bookstore, then fewer adults and boys encounter the experiences, thoughts and subjectivities of girls. The shame associated with male and adult crossover reading demonstrates how women are seen as less valuable on aesthetic grounds. Ruth Graham, in her *Slate* article, claims that adults should be embarrassed to read YAL, "not because it's bad—it isn't—but because it was written for teenagers."[327] Graham's argument draws a clear separation between the subjectivity of teens and adults; she claims that adult readers who like YA are looking for

[327] Graham, "Against Ya".

"escapism, instant gratification, and nostalgia." Above all, she points out, "YA aims to be pleasurable."[328]

Graham defines YA fiction against adult fiction, claiming that these books "present the teenage perspective in a fundamentally uncritical way," allowing adult readers to "abandon the mature insights into that perspective that they (supposedly) have acquired as adults." Additionally, young adult literature is problematic for Graham because it gives the reader satisfying, unambiguous emotional endings and tries to elicit emotional reactions through unrealistic dialogue that adults would reject because of their life experiences. The real concern is the idea that adult readers might be "substituting maudlin teen dramas for the complexity of great adult literature" and are thus "missing something."[329] Central to Graham's argument is the ideas that teenagers are uncritical, and their fiction is opposed to adult experience. This is incredibly important if women writers and women readers are associated with YAL. Being a woman or a girl means that you are incapable of thinking and writing critically and with cultural value.

In recognizing gender parity within the young adult literature publishing and reviewing system, women and men are pushing literature in new and exciting directions together. It is possible that the misguided assumption of women's dominance of YAL seems more pronounced because men have dominated adult literary fiction for so long. In comparison, gender parity in YAL appears skew the field dramatically toward women. By recognizing first that gender parity is occurring, and then by examining how it

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[328] Ibid.

[329] As will be discussed in chapter 2, the assumptions that readers substitute reading one book for another was also at the heart of the anti-multicuralist perspective in the 1980s.

occurred, perhaps young adult literature can outline a path for achieving visibility and equality in literary fiction and other genres through publishing, reviewing and distribution institutions.

CHAPTER 4. MILITARIZATION NARRATIVES IN YAL

Since the 1980s media conglomerates have steadily bought publishing companies and merged them with existing broadcasting and film companies to create infotainment powerhouses. This is especially apparent in YAL, as the leading publishers are now owned by broadcasting companies: "Time Warner is the parent company to Little Brown, Warner Books and Warner Bros. The Murdoch media family includes HarperCollins and 20th Century Fox, as well as the Fox Television Network. Simon & Schuster and Paramount Pictures share a corporate umbrella."[330] As a result, licensing has become a major factor in publishing and created two types of licensing deals: media-driven licenses that use film or other products as the inspiration for literature, and literary licenses that use books as the inspiration for other products.

These licensing collaborations began in the eighties, but at the time publishers still considered their business story-driven. As publishing has moved towards a more marketing/sales driven approach, multimedia licensing has become central to the publishing process. In 1995, Lisa Holton of HarperCollins Children's Books acknowledged that while her company still focused on books, "it's a natural progression for us to use our Fox Network connections to build [the licensing] part of our

[330] M. P. Dunleavy, "License to Publish: Rights Deals between Book Publishers and Licensed Brand Names Are an Increasingly Lucrative Part of the Industry," *Publishers Weekly*, 1995/02/20/.

program."[331] The literary licensing of books helps to create a multigenerational reading market because licenses based on a series can "survive several generations of children, and ultimately serve to sustain the books themselves."[332] This works especially well for film adaptations, which can attract multigenerational and gender crossover audiences because it is seen as an interpersonal form of entertainment; parents see movies with children, adolescents see movies with friends, and couples see movies together. By 2012, multimedia partnerships seemed to play a larger role in publishing. At the Bookseller's Children's Conference, Eric Huang acknowledged that the editorial staff of Penguin Children's Books held meetings with potential media partners and merchandisers *as* stories were being created.[333] The relationships that have made multigenerational marketing possible are now at the heart of the creation process and have allowed for the rapid growth and mainstreaming of crossover YAL stories.

YAL historian and critic Michael Cart has noted that while it is acceptable for children to crossover to adult literature, there has been a stigma attached to writing and reading YAL.[334] Publishers and booksellers in the U.S. have overcome this bias through marketing the same text to separate audiences. According to Cart, the first crossover success was Francesca Lia Block's *Weetzie Bat* (1989) which became popular with 20-30 year olds via word of mouth, crossover book cover appeal, and by listing the book on both adult and children's lists. This latter practice of dividing a book among special interest lists has worked for the crossover marketing of Philip Pullman's *Dark Materials*

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[331] Ibid.

[332] Ibid.

[333] Charlotte Williams, "Publishers Must Be 'Drivers' of Brand," *The Bookseller*, 2012/09/28, 10.

[334] Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 111.

as well as J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, both of which have been released on adult fantasy lists as well as YAL lists.[335]

While media crossover production and marketing is clearly a part of attracting a crossover market, I would also suggest that many of the crossover hits are similar in content. What I will call the "militarization narrative" has emerged through the tradition of the war novel and the rise of militarism in the U.S. Post-Vietnam. The development of the militarization narrative has emerged in YA at a time when both the YAL industry and larger cultural conceptions of youth and warfare were changing. Currently, the crossover popularity of the militarization narrative has led to multimedia licensing that ignore the social critiques of these narratives as a story is translated across multimedia and product platforms.

4.1 Adolescence and American War Literature

Since the Civil War, literature of the United States has viewed war as a process that both fractures and develops the soldier's cohesive sense of self. In his book-length study, *The American Novel of War: A Criitcal Analysis and Classification System*, Wallis Sanborn uses the works of Stephen Crane, Edith Wharton and John Dos Passos to argue that protagonists in the modern war novel exemplify the modernist hero who "overcomes some tragedy…exile, societal alienation or near death experience, that results in an epiphany of sorts."[336] Soldiers transition from a state of "'psuedo-individuals' to

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[335] Ibid., 113.

[336] Wallis R. Sanborn, *The American Novel of War a Critical Analysis and Classification System* (Jefferson, NC: Jefferson, NC : McFarland & Company, 2012), 4.

individuals" through a "statement in and of self-identity."[337] This is presented through an objective third-person or a first-person point of view that limits mass tragedy to the individual.[338] Sanborn's description of the war novel is closely related to the bildungsroman, a coming-of-age narrative in which a young adult learns to balance personal desire against societal expectations of acceptable behavior. This relationship between war and adolescence in literature reflects the conflation of adolescence and war in American culture at large. In the late nineteenth century, children's literature varied from idealized battlefront adventure novels to serious anti-slavery publications for children, to ABC books designed to teach confederate values. Children were expected to participate in developing the future of a divided country. Yet adults also envisioned the rebellious youth as a threat to the community. According to children's literature historian Leonard Marcus, "one of the war's major impacts on America's children has been to intensify their natural tendency to rebel against their elders, as if the War Between the States had spawned a home-front war between the generations."[339]

During World War I, the emerging concept of adolescence was used to conceptualize American involvement in a war on foreign soil. In 1904, G. Stanley Hall published his seminal work on adolescence, defining this period of life as one of "storm and strife," that requires strict adult supervision. Interestingly, his definition, built on the German term *sturm und drang* originates from the eponymous German play addressing the American Revolution, and thus Hall's definition is conceptually linked to American

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[337] Ibid.

[338] Ibid., 3.

[339] Marcus, *Minders of Make-Believe : Idealists, Entrepreneurs, and the Shaping of American Children's Literature*, 33.

war. President Wilson articulated the relationship between adolescence and war in a speech about U.S. intervention in World War I, when he described America as a "nation hitherto devoted to domestic development [which] now finds its first task roughly finished and turns about to look curiously into the tasks of the great world at large, seeking its special part and place of power."[340] Wilson's comments echoed the divide between childhood and adulthood; children lived their stories in the domestic sphere while adults occupied the public sphere. His portrayal of the nation's emergence into the larger arena of world politics used the metaphor of adolescence to naturalize war as a means of satisfying "curiosity," and the desire to be "special" and to seek "power." He implies that war is necessary to the coming-of-age of the United States, a transition that occurs through emergence into international relationships and a perceived responsibility to all of humanity. [341]

Literary scholar Jonathan Vincent argues that World War I novels upheld this view of war by acclimating "citizens to a more incorporated national body."[342] Sacrifice was integrated into the role of the citizen in a superior world by portraying the current war as a contribution toward building an ideal civilization.[343] The individual thus sacrificed his individuality temporarily to join his compatriots, a theme that benefited war mobilization and the draft. Another popular plot during this era was what Vincent calls the "preparedness" text, which "accustomed liberal, middle-class readerships to less

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[340] Jonathan Vincent, ""Tendrils of Association": World War I Narrative and the U.S. Political Imaginary"," *American Literature* 82, no. 3 (2010): 564.

[341] Ibid.

[342] Ibid., 556-57.

[343] Ibid., 557.

heroic views of war" and aimed to realistically portray the experience of group integration, military routine, and military bureaucracy as a form of escape from (feminized) domestic life. While these texts placed soldiers in the context of a larger military and state unit, these narratives still focused on the individual's experience and self-realization within this system.[344]

Although adolescence was important to the political imagination of war up through World War I, war literature for adolescents was surprisingly absent during World War II. In a study of prizewinning literature from 1940-1990, Caroline C. Hunt found that from 1941-1943 the war was rarely mentioned in children's fiction. Instead, classics from this period were set in an idyllic past, featuring fantastic animal stories, such as *The Black Stallion*, *My Friend Flicka*, and *Lassie Come Home*. This demand for fantasy was also reflected in YAL literature set in all-teenage worlds. Two major bestsellers, Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer* and John R. Tunis's *All American* ignored the war completely, focusing on dating and high school sports. These writers went on to write about the war, but not until the 1960s.[345] Hunt suggests that the lack of WWII children's literature in the U.S. might be explained by the fact that American parents, unlike their British counterparts, *could* shield their children from a war because battle took place on foreign soil. Towards the end of the war and in the post-war period, a small subgenre of pulp war propaganda novels for adolescents emerged, but "Most writers of the

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[344] Vincent goes on to argue that even modernist avant-garde anti-war novels, such as E.E. Cumming's *The Enormous Room*, John Dos Passos's *Three Soldiers*, and Ernest Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms*, shared a desire to portray realistic experiences of war and the disembodied individual that characterized this time in U.S. Political history. ibid., 573.

[345] Caroline C. Hunt, "U.S. Children's Books About the World War Ii Period: From Isolationism to Internationalism, 1940-1990," *The Lion and the Unicorn* 18, no. 2 (1994): 195.

1940s…focused single-mindedly on a purely American past in American settings without references to other countries. This enabled them to present American history as essentially linear and purposeful," a perspective that was also in line with adult film and literary representation of the war.[346]

War novels from the Civil War through World War II focused primarily on the soldier's experience. They took either a modernist stance on identity formation, often using the singular, first person perspective or a postmodernist approach delivered through multiple narrators or characters and played with narrative time in non-linear structures that emphasized the fragmentation and absurdity of war, time and the self. Themes such as death, destruction and the dichotomies that emerge during war (enemy/ally, officers/enlisted men, indigenous people/invaders also limit war literature to the experience of soldiers and combat. This singular focus on the soldier began to change during the Vietnam War as attitudes toward war itself began to change.

During Vietnam, changing attitudes toward war were directly affected by the relationship between war and youth culture. As the draft conscripted more young men into war, the average age of soldiers dropped. In World War II, the average soldier was twenty-six years old; in Vietnam he was nineteen.[347] Teenagers and young adults who rejected their conscription through the military draft led the anti-war movement, and their actions made visible the effects of U.S. militarism at home. Inspired by peaceful protest movements, in 1967 young people placed daisies in the rifle barrels of riot police present

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[346] Ibid., 201.

[347] Larry R. Johannessen, "The Vietnam War in Young Adult Literature: Practical Approaches That Foster Response," (1993): 48.

to maintain order, and this iconic image came to symbolize the peace movement.[348] In 1970, National Guardsmen shot students involved in anti-war protests at Kent State University. Both of these events, along with numerous protests, exposed the use of military force against peaceful civilians as students were beaten, shot and silenced through physical and bureaucratic force. The violence against youth revealed a growing generational divide and the willingness of adults to use force to control over the political participation of youth.

Anti-war protests at universities expanded into a broader youthful rebellion against adult oppression. At the University of California at Berkeley, the Free Speech Movement was born in opposition to the administration's attempt to ban student political organizations from fundraising on campus.[349] Protests also began to pop up in high schools, where students protested the lack of inclusion of students of color in major social positions of power (on football teams, clubs, etc.) following racial integration.[350] While control over students was not always violent, the militaristic discipline used at schools became a growing concern not only for students, but also for some educators. Edgar Z. Friednenberg, a Brooklyn College teacher of education, conducted a study in which he "described a rigid system of hall passes, detention for minor offenses, lack of free time or free space, dress codes" that allowed schools to "'move smoothly,' but the 'fundamental pattern is still one of control, distrust, and punishment.'"[351] The strict discipline and

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[348] Lucy Rollin, *Twentieth-Century Teen Culture by the Decades : A Reference Guide* (Westport, Conn.: Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, 1999), 198.

[349] Ibid., 203.

[350] Ibid., 216.

[351] qtd. inibid., 212.

control used by schools sounds disturbingly like military training strategies that work through repressing free time, space and expression. This cultural rebellion against adult authority during the 1960s characterized young adults as capable of political and ideological autonomy, and this began to translate into literature.

As the relationship between youth and war was changing, young adult literature experienced a renaissance through the rise of realist fiction for young adults. YAL Author Nat Hentoff perfectly articulates the concerns of youth during this period:

> The reality of being young—the tensions, sensual yearnings and sometimes satisfactions, the resentment against the educational lock step that makes children fit the schools, the confusing recognition of their parents' hypocrisies and failures—all this is absent from most books for young readers.[352]

Writers and publishers addressed this need for new YAL through the "problem novel," which reached the height of its popularity from 1965-1973, a period which Michael Cart describes as remarkable for the boldness with which writers began to break new ground, in terms of both subject and style as they addressed the real concerns of teenagers through young adult fiction.[353] After issuing his critique of YAL, Nat Hentoff went on to write *I'm really dragged, but nothing gets me down*, a novel featuring a young Jewish teenager who contemplates dodging the Vietnam draft as his eighteenth birthday nears. Hentoff's book and the political concerns flooding YAL in the seventies mark a shift in the audience and content of literature during this period.

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[352] qtd. in Cart and ebrary Inc., *Young Adult Literature from Romance to Realism*. 26.
[353] Ibid., 30.

In earlier war fiction, combat narratives revolved around the soldier's experience as a militarized subject. The Vietnam War changed whose voices narrated war stories as young adults became central to military goals. In previous war literature, "soldiers' experiences [became] the legitimate measure of truth against which all other narratives are discounted as less valid. Women's and children's choices…[were] thus positioned as the 'lesser' voices of war because of their assumed lack of knowledge about frontline experiences."[354] Young adult literature during the Vietnam era reversed this trend, tackling a variety of social and political issues facing adolescents in wartime. In his 1993 study of Vietnam YAL, Larry R. Johannessen identifies four types of YAL stories that broaden the view of the Vietnam War by recognizing the refugee story, the war at home, the impact of the war on children growing up during Vietnam, in addition to the combat narrative.[355] The necessary inclusion of young adult experiences and perspectives on the Vietnam War, especially in a genre of literature published and marketed toward young adults, necessitated the development of a new narrative that expanded portrayals of war to include the effects of everyone living in a militarized culture. As war fiction shifted toward a young adult audience, war narratives became narratives of militarization.

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[354] Andrea McKenzie, "The Children's Crusade: American Children Writing War," *The Lion and the Unicorn* 31, no. 2 (2007): 87.

[355] Larry R. Johannessen, "Young-Adult Literature and the Vietnam War," *English Journal* 82, no. 5 (1993): 43.

4.2 Militarization Narratives and Young Adult Literature

The militarization narrative differs from Sanborn's definition of the American war novel in both its scope and narrative form.[356] The war novel is concerned primarily with the event of war, but militarism "is much broader than war, comprising an underlying system of institutions, practices, values, and cultures. Militarism is the extension of war-related, war-preparatory, and war-based meanings and activities outside of 'war proper' and into social and political life more generally."[357] As such, militarism considers the acts and behavior associated with war beyond the events of battle. Yet militarism is not an extension of war, instead it refers to the "blurring or erasure of distinctions between war and peace, military and civilian."[358] Part of this erasure, as described by feminist Cynthia Enloe, occurs through the process of militarization:

> Things start to become militarized when their legitimacy depends on their associations with military goals. When something becomes militarized, it appears to rise in value…But is really a process of loss. Even though something seems to gain value by association with military goals, it actually surrenders control and gives up the claim to its own worthiness…[and] something has worth only if it allows militaries to achieve their missions.[359]

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[356] I use the term "narrative" rather than "genre" because genre definitions such as romance, fantasy, etc. imply a primary plot structure, writing style, and other definitive categorizations. Militarization narratives can appear within a variety of genres.

[357] Lynne Segal, "Gender, War and Militarism: Making and Questioning the Links," *Feminist Review*, no. 88 (2008).

[358] Ibid., 7.

[359] Cynthia H. Enloe and ebrary Inc., The Curious Feminist Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire, (Berkeley: University of California Press,, 2004), http://login.ezproxy.lib.purdue.edu/login?url=http://site.ebrary.com/lib/purdue/Doc?id=10068601. 145.

Young adult novels after the Vietnam War often go beyond the combat narrative to reveal and occasionally comment upon how societies involve their youth in conflict as soldiers, as refugees of war, members of the media, guerrilla resistance, or simply as the justification for military action. These narratives bring in multiple militarized characters without using a postmodern, shifting narrative viewpoint. Instead these narratives rely on linear plot structures and first-person narration or other unified viewpoints and to illustrate the all-encompassing system of militarization. The militarization narrative eschews the war novel's portrayal of the soldier's fragmented identity/experience. Although a protagonist may feel fragmented or alienated because of war, they are always able to understand their role in a larger system of militarization. They do not come to the revelation of their own participation in militarism--they are already aware of this--instead epiphanies relate to the limits of militarized societies. The militarization narrative is thus concerned with the effects of militarism rather than the individual's coming-of-age through participation in war as a soldier.

4.3 Militarization in Ender's Game and The Hunger Games

This new wave of militarization narratives in young adult fiction marks a turn in how we conceive of children and adults in militarized societies. Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* (1985), and Suzanne Collins's *Hunger Game* series (2008-2010), illustrate the complex process of militarization. First, these narratives show how subjects relate to the larger systems that militarize them; second, they show multiple ways that subjects are militarized; and finally they show how militarization leads to the perception of war as

spectacle, an abstraction that alienates people from their involvement in war and results in the reproduction of militarism and total war.

During the fighting and failure of the Vietnam War the U.S. conception of war shifted radically. As the American public grew frustrated with U.S. involvement in the war, the state had to justify occupation in new ways and the war began to be conceptualized as a state of perpetual unrest rather than a temporary battle focused on winning or losing.[360] As philosopher and cultural theorist Ian Buchanan points out in his "Treatise on Militarism," one of the first steps in militarization is to ask the public to conceptualize a current, failing engagement as a preemptive strike, one that will prevent a more damaging war in the future.[361] Drawing on the work of Jean Baudrillard, Buchanan points out that this shift created "a new kind of will to war, one that…defined itself…in terms of perseverance."[362] Vietnam also forced the United States to change its military strategies as anti-war protests became more prevalent; the military demonstrated that they could continue battles with fewer U.S. casualties by relying on technology for distance-killing rather than relying on ground troops. Buchanan claims that this factor "would become decisive in re-shaping militarism as an incorporeal system."[363] By re-conceptualizing war as waged through distance fighting, and as a perpetual state of preemptive strike, a society begins to take its first steps toward militarization. As killing becomes defined as preventative, and becomes incorporeal, the boundaries defining wartime and peacetime blur. This process of U.S. militarization can be seen in the

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[360] Ian Buchanan, "Treatise on Militarism," *symplokē* 14, no. 1/2 (2006): 155.
[361] Ibid., 162.
[362] Ibid., 160.
[363] Ibid.

Reagan administration's conversion of U.S. resources for military resources in the transformation of the Indian Ocean island Diego Garcia into "a launchpad for combat operations," the acquisition of flyover rights in various African countries to make troop occupation run smoothly, and the expansion of arms deals and training programs to "client-states."[364] With these expansions have also come a consistent reliance on "airpower as a substitute for diplomacy," as evident in Vietnam, the bombing of Cambodia in 1969, bombings of the Persian Gulf throughout the 1990s, as intervention in Kosovo, the airstrikes targeting Al-Queda in Afghanistan after September 11th; and finally as the selling point for the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* illustrates a slide into militarization by creating a world in which a globally united Earth is preparing to strike against an alien army of "buggers" from another galaxy. Card's protagonist, Ender Wiggin, begins the novel as a six year-old boy who enters Battle School to be trained as a military prodigy and space battleship commander. Ender is persuaded to enlist by Colonel Graff, who convinces Ender to join the Bugger war by portraying Ender's involvement as an important preventative measure. Although it has been generations since the last bugger war, Colonel Graff reminds Ender that "they damn near wiped us out last time" and "in the eighty years since the last war, they've had as much time to prepare as we have. We need the best we can get, and we need them fast."[365] This eighty-year gap in battles could be construed as a time of peace—Earth has had neither confrontation nor communication

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[364] A. J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism : How Americans Are Seduced by War* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2005), 192.

[365] Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*, Rev. ed. (New York: Tor, 1991), 25.

with the Buggers—instead Graff portrays this as a period of war preparation. He also assumes that the buggers, like humans, have spent this time preparing for the next war, despite any evidence that they intend to return to earth. Ender's enrollment in the Battle School is portrayed as necessary to prevent another, more damaging war with the buggers. Both this outlook and the imagined standoff between the Buggers and Earth have been compared to the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, in which preparation for an impending world-ending war leads to the militarization of society.[366]

Unlike the war novel, which seeks to confine the story of war to a single time frame or event, the militarization narrative includes a long history that blurs the boundary between war and peace. As a result, young adult protagonist is always-already able to see war as a perpetual state, and to imagine himself as a vital part of that military endeavor. Colonel Graff's references to the Bugger war prompt Ender to fill in the details of the battle based on propaganda videos shown in school each year. As a small child, Ender is already familiar with the linear narrative used to describe the war on Earth: "The Scathing of China. The Battle of the Belt. Death and suffering and terror. And Mazer Rackham and his brilliant maneuvers, destroying an enemy fleet twice his size and twice his firepower, using the little human ships that seemed so frail and weak. Like children fighting with grown-ups. And we won."[367] Ender's ability to recite this story shows the complete integration of military history in his culture—even children can tell the story,

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[366] David Wheat, "Dubya's Game: Motive Utilitarianism and the Doctrine of Preemption," *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 17, no. 3 [67] (2006): 6.

[367] Card, *Ender's Game*, 25.

which is conceptualized as an unending string of battles. Ender's initial description of Mazer Rackham's triumph as "children fighting grown-ups" shows his understanding of both his role as a child, and of the history of his planet; working toward military goals is seen as parallel to adolescence. As Ender proceeds through battle school, he learns that he is not fighting other children, but the grown-ups who seek to militarize him. And in doing so, he completes their process of militarization.

Not only is Ender aware of his relationship to war as a citizen of a militarized society, he is also aware of how militarism influences his personal history. When Ender's parents protest his enrollment in Battle School, Colonel Graff tells them, "we already have your consent, granted in writing at the time conception was confirmed, or he could not have been born."[368] Because Ender's parents produced child prodigies, they were allowed to break the law and have a third child. Graff is clear about the role the military played in Ender's conception. After Ender's older brother Peter was deemed too violent for military leadership, and his sister deemed too compassionate, Graff tells Ender that "we requisitioned you."[369] The use of the military term "requisitioned" to describe Ender's birth circumscribes Ender into "mortally configured networks of utility"[370] in which Ender has value as a "Third" child only because he has value as a potential great military leader.

Colonel Graff's strategy in Ender's recruitment is to both honestly inform Ender of his role in a militarized system and convince Ender to dedicate his life to a military

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[368] Ibid., 20.

[369] Ibid., 24.

[370] Felicity Colman, "Affective Imagery: Screen Militarism," in *Gilles Deleuze: Image and Text*, ed. Eugene W. Holland, Daniel W. Smith, and Charles J. Stivale (Continuum, 2009), 143.

goal. In order for Ender to become completely militarized, he must abandon any other value he assigns to himself. After hearing about the pride and shame that he brings to his parents as a third child, Ender asks for clarification: "So my parents love me and don't love me?" to which Graff replies, "They love you. The question is whether they want you here. Your presence in this house is a constant disruption."[371] After considering this new information about his birth, as well as Graff's references to the history of the bugger wars, Ender accepts the offer to go to Battle School: "It's what I was born for, isn't it? If I don't go, why am I alive?…I don't want to go…but I will."[372] Ender fully accepts his militarization and disavows any value he might have had outside of military use.

Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* series also uses military history as a method of establishing the process of militarization. The history of Panem is used to establish the role of protagonist Katniss Everdeen in a militarized society. Like Ender, Katniss is able to recount her culture's war history. Katniss gives us the official Panem narrative of her country's development following a brutal civil war:

> The result was Panem, a shining Capital ringed by thirteen districts, which brought peace and prosperity to its citizens. Then came the Dark Days, the uprising of the districts against the Capitol. Twelve were defeated, the thirteenth obliterated. The Treaty of Treason gave us the new laws to guarantee peace and, as our yearly reminder that the Dark Days must never be repeated, it gave us the Hunger Games.[373]

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[371] Card, *Ender's Game*, 23.

[372] Ibid., 26.

[373] *Gender, War, and Militarism : Feminist Perspectives*, ed. Laura Sjoberg and Sandra Via (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Santa Barbara, Calif. : Praeger, 2010), 5.

The Hunger Games reflects a world that has entered into a state of perpetual war. Military power is used to enforce this isolation and the Hunger Games are an annual event in which each district, excluding the Capitol, is required to send one boy and one girl to fight to death in an arena.

Like Ender's discussion of the battles in the Bugger wars, Katniss's description reflects the names of battles and treaties used in official state narratives of military triumph. As a sixteen year-old girl within the age range of conscription for the Hunger Games, Katniss is forced to see herself as part of a longer history of militarism in Panem.[374] The games are conceived as a preemptive strike against dissidents in its districts, justifying the state's militarism as a small loss of life (twenty-three children a year) to prevent a second, more damaging civil war. In doing so Panem blurs the line between peace and wartime.

Even before she is chosen as a "tribute" to the games, Katniss recognizes that the districts are physically isolated from one another in order to prevent political unrest and to preserve labor exploitation by the Capitol. She articulates how the games psychologically repress the populations in the districts by "Taking the kids from our districts, forcing them to kill one another while we watch—this is the Capitol's way of reminding us how totally we are at their mercy. How little chance we would stand of surviving another rebellion. Whatever words they use, the real message is clear."[375]

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[374] Collins also connects Panem's history to the real-world history of readers through references to the fall of the Roman Empire, typically through the name "Panem," and the Roman names given to specific politicians within the series. Specific discussion of these references can be found in Mary F. Pharr, *Of Bread, Blood, and the Hunger Games Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*, ed. Leisa A. Clark and Mary Pharr (Jefferson: Jefferson : McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012), 21.

[375] Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games* (New York: Scholastic Press, 2008), 18-19.

Following her explanation of the Hunger Games, Katniss articulates how her own personal history affects her ability to resist state military and economic oppression, describing her location as "District Twelve. Where you can starve to death in safety."[376] She recognizes the hypocrisy in the historical narratives, in which the Capitol controls the district for their own protection while oppressing them through economic means,[377] but she also recognizes how her place as a poor citizen in Panem has shaped her complicity in the system. Katniss recalls, "When I was younger…the things I would blurt out about District 12, about the people who rule our country…Eventually I understood this would only lead us to more trouble. So I learned to hold my tongue and to turn my features into an indifferent mask so that no one could ever read my thoughts."[378] The separation Katniss constructs between her critical view of the Capitol and her indifferent physical mask is a strategy she develops to survive in a militarized state.

This explanation of military dominance also speaks to the use of first-person narration in militarization stories for adolescents. At a time when adolescents are learning to manage their interior thoughts and external behavior, militarized adolescents are learning to manage their external behavior in order to maintain their value in a militarized society. Katniss uses first-person narration to to both preserve and combine her "indifferent mask" with her internal thoughts. Through Katniss's recitation of the official history of Panem and her own analysis of that history through the use of the first-person perspective, readers can see how Katniss "rises above individual psychological chaos and

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[376] Ibid., 6.

[377] Pavlik, "Absolute Power Games," Pharr, *Of Bread, Blood, and the Hunger Games Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*, 30.

[378] Collins, *The Hunger Games*, 6.

self-interested motivations" to recognize her militarization and eventually become involved in collective action.[379]

Although Katniss and Ender become soldiers, their stories are not limited to soldiers' experiences and first person narration, thus they can be categorized as militarization narratives rather than war stories. *Ender's Game* and *The Hunger Games* are stories of militarization because they show the process by which *all* civilians lose value outside of military goals. Ender's brother Peter and sister Valentine, though rejected by the Colonel Graff as potential military leaders, are civilians whose value is determined by their utility in shaping Ender as a military prodigy. Throughout his training Ender sees his siblings as two poles that define his identity.[380] Peter is the "murderer at heart"[381] that Ender does not want to become, and Valentine is "the one person who loved [Ender]."[382] Each time Ender commits violence against bullies, he judges himself according to whether he believes Peter would have done the same. In the first chapter of the novel Ender is being monitored by the International Federation to determine his fitness for Battle School when he is bullied by a group of boys at school. In response, Ender attacks the leader Stilson and continues to kick him after he is unable to respond. As Ender walks away, he tells himself, "I am just like Peter. Take my monitor away, and I am just like Peter."[383] In this instance, Ender mourns the loss of his

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[379] Clemente, Bill, "Panem in America: Crisis Economics and a Call for Political Engagement," in *Of Bread, Blood, and the Hunger Games Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*, ed. Leisa A. Clark and Mary Pharr (Jefferson : McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012), 21.

[380] Outterson Murphy, "The Child Soldier and the Self in Ender's Game and The Hunger Games, in Pharr, *Of Bread, Blood, and the Hunger Games Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*, 206.

[381] Card, *Ender's Game*, 14.

[382] Ibid., 151.

[383] Ibid., 8.

humanity by acknowledging that he is as violent as his brother, yet in the same sentence he understands that he will not have value in the militarized system if he proves to be like his brother. Each time that Ender compares himself to Peter he learns to place himself within a militarized conception of war. He explains his attack on Stilson by claiming that "Knocking him down won the first fight. I wanted to win all the next ones too. So they'd leave me alone."[384] This justification fits with Graff's logic of a preemptive strike against the buggers after eighty years of peace.

At the battle school, Ender kills a second bully and immediately thinks to himself, "Peter might be scum, but Peter had always been right, always right; the power to cause pain is the only power that matters, the power to kill and destroy, because if you can't kill then you are always subject to those who can, and nothing and no one will ever save you."[385] This is precisely the lesson discussed by Colonel Graff in the chapter's interjection, when he tells another military officer that he will not prevent the fight from happening because "Ender Wiggin must believe that no matter what happens, no adult will ever, ever step in to help him in any way…If he does not believe that, then he will never reach the peak of his abilities."[386] The existence of Peter serves the IF's purpose in training Ender to become a self-reliant killer.

Chapter interjections such as this frame Ender's narrative and reinforce the comparison between military and civilian thinking. Instead of first person narration, Ender's story is split into two formats; the bulk of the narrative is delivered through third-

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[384] Ibid., 19.
[385] Ibid., 212.
[386] Ibid., 202.

person narration limited to Ender's point-of-view. However, each chapter begins with an interjection into Ender's story in the form of dialogue between high-ranking officers planning Ender's military training. These interjections validate Ender's analysis of his militarization, undermining adult (and audience) assumptions about "children's assumed inability to recognize manipulation…and the perceived limitations of children's intelligence and capability."[387] The interjections show similarities between Ender's strategies and those of his adult superior officers through a contrast in narrative structure (dialogue versus prose) and format (different fonts). This comparison allows readers to see Ender's fears as productive rather than destructive—he is not losing his sense of identity, but developing his ability to think according to military strategy. Although he is upset about his comparison to Peter, he continues to participate in Battle School and to destroy his competitors.

Valentine serves a similar purpose. She is called in by Colonel Graff to reaffirm Ender's humanity whenever he becomes so depressed that he may fail to complete the next step of military training. After Ender repeatedly kills himself in a video game intended to provide him psychological release from the Battle School, Colonel Graff calls on Valentine to write a letter to Ender in which she tells him that he is nothing like Peter. Despite Ender's knowledge that the letter "isn't the real thing because they made her write it…to them Val was just one more tool to use to control him," the letter forces Ender back into the Battle School competitive environment, if only to outwit the adults who control the military system.

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[387] Sara K. Day, "Liars and Cheats: Crossing the Lines of Childhood, Adulthood, and Morality in Ender's Game.(Critical Essay)," *English Studies in Canada* 38, no. 3-4 (2012): 214.

The Hunger Games extends beyond the family unit to show how capitalism and militarization are intertwined in a process that objectifies human beings. Panem is specifically structured as a ring of districts with power concentrated in the Capitol, and each district is responsible for producing one type of material goods. Collins uses the governmental structure of the districts to examine how children in all districts are militarized, though in different ways depending on their position in the country's capitalist structure.

While life in Panem's Capitol and the luxurious District 1 and District 2 do not appear to be under military control, these districts fit Enloe's description of militarized societies. Citizens in these districts are told that people in the rebellious outer districts must be strictly monitored in order to protect the capitol and the inner districts. Citizens of the inner district are thus valued as justification to increase security and military surveillance. In the Hunger Games Katniss discovers that "the kids from the wealthier districts, the volunteers, the ones who have been fed and trained throughout their lives" for the Games are "overly vicious, arrogant, better fed, but only because they are the Capitol's lapdogs."[388] This is not surprising given that many of the District 2 inhabitants are "funneled into the ranks of the Peacekeepers," who are "trained young and hard for combat."[389] Because the Capitol treats the inner districts well in exchange for the production of military weapons and soldiers, the children from these districts consider the Hunger Games an "opportunity for wealth and a kind of glory not seen elsewhere."[390] For

[388] Collins, *The Hunger Games*, 94, 161.
[389] Ibid., 193.
[390] Ibid.

them, the Games are about choice and honor rather than military oppression. They appear to rise in value because of this honor, but they lose any value as human beings who can be killed off in the Hunger Games.

The Hunger Games hold a different meaning for children in the outer districts who do not enjoy the privileges of close association with the Capitol. People in District 12 see the Hunger Games as "humiliating as well as torturous."[391] They are told that wild, dangerous animals live beyond the fence that separates District 12 from the radioactive remains of obliterated District 13. These citizens seem to gain value as protected citizens of Panem, but they lose all value as human beings. In exchange for this protection, they work in dangerous mines, are given meager food rations, and are under constant surveillance by "Peacekeepers" who ensure that citizens do not rebel against Capitol control. These citizens understand that the games are inherently biased against the impoverished children of the outer districts. Although every child between twelve and eighteen must submit their names to the lottery from which tributes are selected, the poor children are forced to add their names multiple times through a seemingly fair system. Katniss explains the economic forces at work in the lottery:

> Say you poor and starving as we were. You can opt to add your name more times in exchange for tesserae. Each tessera is worth a meager year's supply of grain and oil for one person. You may do this for each of your family members as well.. So, at the age of twelve, I had my name entered

[391] Ibid., 94, 19.

> four times… at the age of sixteen, my name will be in the reaping twenty times.[392]

For poor children, choosing to forgo tesserae means starving yourself, your younger siblings and even your parents. Not only is this system unfair, but the poor nutrition these children often receive means that they are not in good health nor in a physical condition that would allow them to compete equally with inner district tributes. The young adults in District 12 are conscripted into becoming soldiers, and they must be rounded up by the Peacekeepers each "Reaping Day" to enter their names into the lottery, just as their parents are forced to work for low wages to produce goods that will be shipped to the Capitol.

In each of these novels, militarization is a process of blurring the lines between war and peace. All citizens live in a state of perpetual war and have value only in their relationship to military goals. As such, the central conflict of the series revolves around the relationship between childhood and militarization, which is often portrayed as a conflict between childhood and adulthood. In "Liars and Cheats: Crossing the Lines of Childhood, Adulthood, and Morality in *Ender's Game*," Sara K. Day claims that "over the course of the novel Ender becomes convinced that adults should be regarded primarily as deceptive enemies," which causes him to reject "the version of adulthood that he believes Graff personifies."[393] Day sees this as an indication of Ender's belief in "the apparent inevitability of loss between childhood and adulthood."[394] In their analysis

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[392] Ibid., 13.

[393] Day, "Liars and Cheats: Crossing the Lines of Childhood, Adulthood, and Morality in Ender's Game.(Critical Essay)," 219.

[394] Ibid.

of *Ender's Game* and its retelling in *Ender's Shadow*, Christine Doyle and Susan Louise Stewart compare *Ender's Game* to the traditional narrative form of the school-story in which students view teachers as enemies.[395] Both of these works point to deception as the root of conflict between adults and children. Sarah Otterson Murphy expands on the adult-child relationship by viewing *Ender's Game* and *The Hunger Games* "as allegories of how adults and children perceive each other — adults as violating, deceitful, and manipulative; children as unknowably alien, unruly, and dangerously powerful" and suggesting that the central conflict is "between children and the adults they may become."[396] Otterson Murphy includes deception as fundamental to adult manipulation of children's violence. In all of these studies, the conflict and the characters are defined through a child-adult divide; however, I would add that this description of generational conflict should also consider how the adult-child relationship is denied according to their roles in militarization. Otterson Murphy's description of adults as "violating, deceitful and manipulative" can be used to characterize occupying or invading forces, and her description of children is similar to the characterization of guerrilla fighters created by political rulers and state armies. In young adult literature, resistance to adults is often conflated with resistance to adult control over the system of militarization that dehumanizes children as tools of war.

One of the ways adults militarize children is through the conflation of military and entertainment technology, which can be used to both train children in distance

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[395] Christine Doyle and Susan Louise Stewart, "Ender's Game and Ender's Shadow: Orson Scott Card's Postmodern School Stories," *The Lion and the Unicorn* 28, no. 2 (2004): 189.

[396] Otterson Murphy, "The Child Soldier," Pharr, *Of Bread, Blood, and the Hunger Games Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*, 199.

warfare and keep the young in an all-encompassing system surveillance and militarization. The use of this technology results in a militarized consciousness characterized by "participants' inability to act or even react" to the atrocities of war. According to Buchanan, this militarized consciousness blossomed as we developed a reliance on technology to fight battles from a distance, thus "re-shaping militarism as an incorporeal system."[397] When war ceases to be about the destruction of bodies by specific corporeal soldiers, and is viewed through the medium of distance-technology, war loses its relationship to reality. Instead it becomes "'simulation' a pure spectacle no less terrifying or deadly for its lack of reality."[398] The use of technology to this end is a central theme in both *Ender's Game* and *The Hunger Games* trilogy. The protagonists' transition from resistant civilians to a militarized consciousness is developed through first-person narration of the protagonist's relationship to technology. Ultimately, the protagonists begin to see war as simulation and spectacle and "no longer recoil at the *immensity* of the spectrum of militaristic power and its products."[399]

In *Ender's Game* and *The Hunger Games*, the creation of a militarized consciousness is accomplished through a process of alienating or abstracting subjects from their embodied experience, and this process is aided by the use of military and entertainment technologies. *Ender's Game* is aptly titled, as the plot centers on Ender's progress in two separate games while at Battle School. His time is divided by the official

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[397] For a discussion of this development as a result of public outcry against the Vietnam War, see Buchanan, "Treatise on Militarism," 160.

[398] Ian Buchanan reaches this conclusion by drawing on the works of Jean Baudrillard as well as Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

[399] Emphasis hers. Colman, "Affective Imagery: Screen Militarism." 155.

Battle Room Game, in which different armies of children wage a laser-tag simulated war in the Battle Room, and Free Play, a video game that Ender plays on his personal digital desk when he has leisure time. The Battle School and Free Play create Ender's militarized consciousness through making war a spectacle in which killing is an incorporeal act. Ender is physically abstracted from his body through the Battle Room simulations in which soldiers are "frozen" rather than killed. In Free Play, Ender is psycohologically trained to abstract himself from violence. The game adapts to Ender, creating new challenges based on his decisions. Ender moves through the game rapidly until he encounters a Giant who makes him drink from one of two glasses. The liquids in the glasses never repeat, and his video game character always dies. On the day that Ender finally beats the giant, he realizes that "whatever he chose, he would die. The game was rigged."[400] And after spending a few moments imagining his own death, "he jumped at the Giant's face, clambered up his lip and nose, and began to dig in the Giant's eye. The stuff came away like cottage cheese, and as the Giant screamed, Ender's figure burrowed into the eye, climbed right in, burrowed in and in."[401] At the beginning of the killing Ender is directly responsible for the violence, it is "he," Ender, who climbs up the giant's face. But it is "Ender's figure," his metaphorical video game self that kills the giant. The game forces Ender to abstract himself from killing. When facing bullies, Ender always stayed present and took direct responsibility for them, but in the game, killing is an abstract spectacle for Ender.

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[400] Card, *Ender's Game*, 64.

[401] Ibid., 64-65.

Continually facing the giant forces Ender to come to terms with his own death and loss of corporeality. As he faces the giant this final time, he tries to "guess what kind of death each [drink] held. Probably a fish will come out of the ocean and eat me. The foamy one will probably asphyxiate me. I hate this game. It isn't fair." Ender has seen himself die in so many ways and has become accustomed to the impossibility of survival. He is able to imagine his own death, to imagine the most random and violent ways in which he can die, and he faces "a choice between his own grisly death and an even worse murder," and it is only after killing that he thinks about his capacity for violence, acknowledging that "I'm a murderer, even when I play. Peter would be proud of me."[402] The Free Play game functions as psychological training that prepares Ender to commit the kind of violence necessary for intergalactic battle, including his own annihilation.

Because of his training, it is easy for Ender to be tricked into killing through simulation, and he demonstrates a militarized consciousness "in [the] participants' *inability* to act and even react." In the Battle Room, Ender learns how to fight in null gravity, he develops strategies to defeat older and more powerful armies, and he learns to lead his own army of boys. In this game, the boys shoot one another and are "frozen" when shot, simulating death. In the third-person omniscient interjection at the beginning of the chapter Colonel Graff and the mysterious officer Anderson describe the Battle Room as not "merely a training exercise…It's also status, identity, purpose, name; all that makes those children who they are comes out of this game."[403] As Graff argues to change the rules of the Battle Room to create unfair Battle conditions, he claims that "what I'm

[402] Ibid., 65.
[403] Ibid., 70.

doing will bring out [Ender's] genius."[404] Though the physical consequences of war are suspended in the Battle Room, the benefits of battle make their way into the children's real lives. Once again, Ender is cognizant of adult militarization strategies: "It was a strategy. Graff had deliberately set him up to be separate from the other boys, made it impossible for him to be close to them. It made him a better soldier than he would have been otherwise. It also made him lonely, afraid, angry, untrusting. And maybe those traits, too, made him a better soldier."[405]

Before Ender's last few Battle Room exercises, he loses his competitive edge and fully resents the unfairness of the games and the adults running the Battle School. He constantly says "I'm sick of the game," and readers are told that "Ender's mind felt dead. This was stupid."[406] And yet even though he declares "I don't care about the game anymore!" he still goes on to fight the next Battle Room conflict. His desire to beat the adults through the Battle Room game still contributes to their military goals, and Ender is unable to act according to his own desires, conscience, and his aversion to violence. When Ender is finally given a chance to return to Earth to visit Valentine before beginning Command School, his psychological fatigue has made him incapable of action. Ender wants to give up his role as military savior and unemotionally explains to his sister that "they had spent his ambition." As Valentine tries to motivate him, he tells her, "Let someone else be famous…If I'm here…then I won't be there. Somebody else will. Let them have the accident" of fighting in the next bugger war.[407] Ender no longer buys into

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[404] Ibid., 71.
[405] Ibid., 167-68.
[406] Ibid., 215-16.
[407] Ibid., 240.

the argument that his value lies in his dedication to military goals—he now rejects having any value at all.

Ultimately, this inability to act against militarization means that "as spectators we no longer recoil at the *immensity* of the spectrum of militaristic power and its products."[408] Ender fails to see the immensity of his actions as a battle fleet commander. As part of his training in Command School, Ender is introduced to a new game that seamlessly transitions him from the Battle Room and video games to real-time battle. When he arrives, Mazer Rackham, the man who defeated the buggers in the Second Invasion, immediately assaults Ender. Using the physical violence Ender associates with bullies, as well as Ender's animosity towards adults who control the games he is accustomed to beating, Mazer Rackham tricks Ender into war through a "simulator" that Ender believes to be another training tool. In his final simulator battle, Ender destroys a planet that the enemy ships are defending, but in reality he has annihilated the entire bugger planet. When he is informed of this, Ender cannot process his actions: "Real. Not a game. Ender's mind was too tired to cope with it all."[409] When he is finally able to demand an explanation, Graff acknowledges that "Of course we tricked you into it. That's the whole point. If you knew, you couldn't do it."[410] Graff clearly links the use of military and entertainment technology to blunt Ender's ability to react to the immensity of his violence. Mazer Rackham also tells Ender, "It had to be a child…Any decent person who knows what warfare is can never go into battle with a whole heart."[411] They

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[408] Emphasis hers. Colman, "Affective Imagery: Screen Militarism," 155.
[409] Card, *Ender's Game*, 297.
[410] Ibid., 298.
[411] Ibid.

chose a child because of his inexperience in corporeal battle. When experience is mediated through technology, his superior officers can withdraw Ender from the consequences of battle long enough to delay his ability to react until the damage has been done.

Like *Ender's Game, The Hunger Games* series also illustrates the transformation of war into spectacle through the conflation of military and entertainment technology that turns war into spectacle in order to create a militarized Panem consciousness. People in the wealthier areas of Panem are predisposed to this militarized consciousness because they perceive both war and the body as commodity spectacle. The further citizens are removed from the material production of goods, the more they celebrate and participate in militarism. In the Capitol, the wealthier districts see the games as an entertaining spectacle.The Capitol and inner districts see the games as a spectacle of consumption rather than one of war because the games alienate tributes from their bodies in the same way that the cultural beauty standards of Panem alienate these citizens from their own bodies. Katniss's first impression of people in the Capitol is that they are "so dyed, stenciled, and surgically altered they're grotesque," which elicits her "disgust with the Capitol and their hideous fashions."[412] In addition to their bodily enhancements, the design team and the television interviewers and audience treat Katniss as a consumable product.[413] By dehumanizing her, prepping her like "a plucked bird, ready for roasting,"[414] her body is easier to consume as both entertainment and as a necessary

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[412] Collins, *The Hunger Games*, 63.

[413] Koenig, "Communal Spectacle: Reshaping History and Memory through Violence." Pharr, *Of Bread, Blood, and the Hunger Games Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*, 43.

[414] Collins, *The Hunger Games*, 61.

military action to preserve peace.[415] Unlike the people in the districts who struggle to feed their bodies, the people in the Capitol see their own bodies as vehicles and displays for visual and victual consumption.[416] This view is reinforced in the Games through the annual "reaping" of children like crops.[417]

This relationship between spectacle and corporeality is apparent in the way beauty and consumption are built into the structure of the Hunger Games. Each tribute is assigned a team of stylists, and the games involve interviews, parades, and a series of costume changes. Katniss admits that "The Hunger Games aren't a beauty contest, but the best-looking tributes always seem to pull more sponsors."[418] The audience sponsors their favorite tributes by purchasing life-saving supplies that are then parachuted into the arena. Although this allows for the survival of tributes, this small action is not a sign of resistance to the militarization of children within the games, but demonstrates spectator acceptance of the military technology used to turn war between the districts into an annual spectacle.

This view of the body as consumable good transfers over to the way technology is used for military purposes. Multiple groups within the series utilize this technology to manipulate the citizens of Panem. Katniss herself manipulates camera shots in ways that will create her narrative for spectators watching the games at home.[419] She uses close-up

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[415] Pavlik, "Absolute Power Games," Pharr, *Of Bread, Blood, and the Hunger Games Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*, 36.

[416] Clemente, "Panem in America: Crisis Economics and a Call for Political Engagement" ibid., 22.

[417] Clemente, "Panem in America: Crisis Economics and a Call for Political Engagement" ibid., 25.

[418] Collins, *The Hunger Games*, 58.

[419] Allison Layfield, "Identity Construction and the Gaze in the Hunger Games," *The Looking Glass: New Perspectives on Children's Literature* 17, no. 1 (2013).

shots of her wounds, exaggerates facial expressions and engages in a love story on camera to gain audience sympathy. This skill in manipulating an audience via television is not only used by Katniss in the arena, but also in the propaganda tactics used by both the Rebellion and Capitol in the Civil War that Katniss helps to instigate. Katniss recognizes the connections between the Capitol's use of her body and the Rebellion's: "I must now become the actual leader, the face, the voice, the embodiment of the revolution,"[420] To portray her as such, the Rebellion stages her propaganda videos with "the costume, gunfire in the background, just a hint of smoke."[421] Paradoxically, the rebels are interested in Katniss as the embodiment of the movement,[422] but her body becomes a symbol of justice, thus abstracting her as an individual from the body seen on television and in her visits to the struggling districts. Katniss is aware of the crossover between propaganda tactics and the Hunger Games, sarcastically acknowledging that the Rebels will "orchestrate my appearances—as if *that* doesn't sound horribly familiar—and all I have to do is play my part."[423] As the Rebellion takes over the inner district and moves on the Capitol, President Snow and Alma Coin (leader of the Rebellion) hack and scramble one another's television messages in order to influence Panem citizens.[424]

The same conflation of war and entertainment technology that allows the Rebellion to erase the separation between Katniss as flesh-and-blood and Katniss as

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[420] Suzanne Collins, *Mockingjay*, 1st ed., Hunger Games (New York: Scholastic Press, 2010), 10.

[421] Ibid., 41.

[422] Clemente, "Panem in America: Crisis Economics and a Call for Political Engagement" Pharr, *Of Bread, Blood, and the Hunger Games Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*, 21.

[423] Emphasis hers. Collins, *Mockingjay*, 11.

[424] Clemente, "Panem in America: Crisis Economics and a Call for Political Engagement" Pharr, *Of Bread, Blood, and the Hunger Games Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*, 27.

symbol, but it also allows the Rebels to erase the boundary between the Hunger Games and civil war, ultimately leading to the fall of the Capitol. During the rebels' final attack, President Snow tells citizens of the Capitol to bring their children to the mansion for safety. As the children wait to enter, silver parachutes just like the ones used to deliver "sponsor" donations in the Hunger Games drop from hovercrafts into the waiting crowd. Katniss tells us that "Even in this chaos, the children know what silver parachutes contain. Food. Medicine. Gifts. They eagerly scoop them up."[425] When these parachutes explode, Katniss observes that some children hold onto the failed parachutes "as if they might still have something precious inside."[426] By using technology designed to deliver life-saving supplies in the Hunger Games, the rebels are able to elicit a ritualized response from civilians can no longer tell the difference between entertainment and war spectacles. Their inability to distinguish simulacra from reality in an inability to act when war becomes their reality.

The alienation of the soldier from his/her body is one step in a process of militarization rather than a means of addressing the loss of identity/fractured self that is a central theme in war novels. In contrast, Katniss and Ender still maintain their identities after the loss of their corporeal experience through militarization. As Ender processes the destruction he has caused, he moves towards reclaiming himself through his identity and acknowledging his role in history. When Katniss is saved from the arena in her second round in the Hunger Games, she retreats from her rebel saviors in District 13 and reclaims herself through repeating her name. She must reassert her identity before

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[425] Collins, *Mockingjay*, 346.

[426] Ibid.

making the decision to become the Mockingjay, and she does it once again when she withdraws from militarized society completely.

In these novels the primary revelation is not one of self-identity (neither its loss or cohesion), rather it revolves around the protagonist's revelation about the reproduction of militarism. *Ender's Game* climaxes when Ender discovers that the spectacle of war was actual war, and his training games resulted in the annihilation of an entire species and their planet. When Mazer Rackham reveals to Ender that there was no simulation and that all war games were real battles, the structure of the chapters change. In the final chapter, "Speaker for the Dead," the typical interjection between Graff and Anderson changes to reveal the final result of Ender's militarization. The font used in the interjections changes to match that in the third person, limited narration of Ender's story. Although Graff and his superiors feature in the interjection, this scene closely resembles Ender's story in its use of third-person limited point-of-view, and that the use of dialogue is now balanced by prose narration. Graff's conclusion is thus aligned with Ender's conclusion via format and structure. Like Ender, Graff has performed ideally in his work toward military goals, and both Graff and Ender are tried for the war crimes previously deemed as necessary for survival.

Upon realizing that his actions led not to the annihilation of the buggers and their entire culture, Ender is finally able to react against his militarization through a return to embodiment and materiality. When Ender is at his most dangerous, he is completely unaware of his own body and his actions against the Buggers. As he fights "simulator" battles, his perception of his own body and his own existence fades: "The days wore on, with battles every day, until at last Ender settled into the routine of the destruction of

himself. He began to have pains in his stomach. They put him on a bland diet, but soon he didn't have an appetite for anything at all…Ender would mechanically put food in his mouth. But if nobody told him to eat, he didn't eat."[427] Ender's inability to take action has extended to his own physical survival, which he has sacrificed in order to continue playing a game that he hates.

After learning that he has destroyed an entire civilization, Ender decides to reject militarism by embracing corporeality and physically integrating histories into his culture through subverting the result of that militarization—colonization. Ender and his sister Valentine move to the first colony established in the deserted bugger worlds, and Ender tries to de-militarize by living a more material, embodied existence, as well as understanding the corporeal reality of the species he annihilated. His "most important work was exploring what the buggers had left behind, trying to find among structures, machinery, and fields long untended some things that human beings could use, could learn from."[428] In coming to the Buggers' material world, Ender passes on their history and incorporates it into human colonial history.

The book's resolution shows has Ender bridge his psychological world with the physical world of the buggers. In his explorations of the colony, he finds a physical recreation of the dead Giant in his Free Play game. Whereas the Free Play game had always resulted in Ender's death, the buggers give Ender an alternative by presenting him with a cocoon of their next queen in hopes that he will revive their species. His antidote to militarism is to link physical embodiment with history, as he leaves behind Ender to

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[427] Card, *Ender's Game*, 287.

[428] Ibid., 315.

write a history of Bugger civilization. He then becomes "Andrew Wiggin, itinerant speaker for the dead," who speaks the truthful, unromanticized stories of the dead at funerals. He ends the novel carrying "with him a dry white cocoon, looking for the world where the hive-queen could awaken and thrive in peace."[429]

In contrast to a much younger Ender, Katniss is not surprised to discover a relationship between the spectacle of war and reality because she is already aware of it. She is not even surprised that the Capitol and the Rebels use the same technology and strategies to win public approval. Instead, the climax of the novel rests on her realization that the rebels will simply reproduce militarism rather than using it as a means to achieve peaceful ends. Like Ender, her revelation is marked by a return to embodiment and material existence. Throughout her work as the Mockingjay, Katniss both participates in the Rebellion and is unable to take action against her militarization. First, as the Mockingjay, symbol of the revolution, she is unable to "act" onscreen in propaganda videos, and her Rebel production crew shoots film by placing her in real war scenarios and allowing her to behave naturally in response to real battles occurring in the districts. She cannot "act" for the purpose of achieving their military goals, but they are able to use her as a military tool nonetheless.

Her inability to take action against her country's militarization reaches a climax when she witnesses the death of her sister, a moment that triggers her disembodiment. Katniss's sister Prim rushes to give aid to injured children at the President's mansion and

[429] Ibid., 323-24.

is killed by a bomb. The following chapter opens with the destruction of Katniss's body and her change into the Mockingjay that she has symbolized:

> Real or not real? I am on fire. The balls of flame that erupted from the parachutes shot over the barricades, through the snowy air, and landed in the crowd. I was just turning away when one caught me, ran its tongue up the back of my body, and transformed me into something new. A creature as unquenchable as the sun…Perhaps there are periods of unconsciousness, but what can it matter if I can't find refuge in them? I am Cinna's bird, ignited, flying frantically to escape something inescapable…I consume myself, but to no end.[430]

Katniss has lost all ability to distinguish between "Real or not real." Her grief for her sister and the war have physically and mentally destroyed her, and turned her "into something new." She transitions into spectacle when she becomes the mockingjay costume designed for her during the Hunger Games. This transition is followed by her realization that she has been "flying frantically to escape something inescapable." In volunteering to save her sister from conscription in the Hunger Games, Katniss was unable to avoid her own militarization, and ultimately brought about the very death that she was trying to avoid. Like Ender, Katniss has been unable to fight against a militarization process that she hates.

After her sister's death, Katniss retreats further from her bodily existence, and her role of the Mockingjay by further inaction. She stops speaking and rejects the voice that

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[430] Collins, *Mockingjay*, 348.

has characterized both the literal mockingjays and the symbolic Mockingjay that inspired the Rebellion. Even without her participation, Katniss is still pulled into her role in the Rebellion: "I don't ask about anyone or anything, but people bring me a steady stream of information" on the war and politics.[431] She abandons all care for her body, noting that "It falls to Haymitch to check on me, make sure I'm eating and using my medicines."[432] Katniss's militarism has led to her incorporeal existence, in which she moves through the President's mansion like a ghost, "wandering unauthorized through the mansion. Into bedrooms and offices, ballrooms and baths."[433]

This cycle is broken when she realizes that it is her own complicity in the war is not the sole cause of her sister's death; the reproduction of militarism by the Rebellion has also played a part. Eventually she wanders into the area of the mansion where President Snow has been detained after the revolution. He tells her that it was not the Capitol that dropped the parachute bombs, but the Rebels who sought to gain public approval by showing that the Capitol would bomb its own children. This revelation is followed by the Rebel President Coin's clear reproduction of the Capitol's military oppression when she suggests that "in lieu of eliminating the entire Capitol population, we have a final, symbolic Hunger Games, using the children directly related to those who held the most power" in order to appease the many victims of the war who are "calling for a complete annihilation" of Capitol citizens.[434] In deciding which way she will vote, Katniss thinks, "Was it like this then? Seventy-five years or so ago?…Was there dissent?

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[431] Ibid., 351.
[432] Ibid.
[433] Ibid.
[434] Ibid., 368-69.

All those people I loved, dead, and we are discussing the next Hunger Games in an attempt to avoid wasting life. Nothing has changed. Nothing will ever change now."[435] Ian Buchanan's axiom on militarism perfectly describes the relationship Katniss recognizes between militarization and government. In Panem, militarism has become "a substitute for governance," and both the Capitol and the Rebellion "impose a military hierarchy rather than establish a good society" because they "trust the weapon not the man." Katniss agrees to the Hunger Games, which allows her to gain permission to assassinate Snow. When she is given the opportunity, she assassinates the newly instated President Coin and leaves Snow to be killed by an angry mob, thus showing that she believes neither ruling party will bring about change. She is now capable of taking action against those who wish to militarize her, even if she is only able to do so using their weapons.

After this final act, Katniss is banished. Like Ender, she uses her isolation from militarized society to return to embodiment. In the final chapter, Katniss is sent to District 12, where she lives in the house she awarded as a survivor of the Hunger Games. Initially, she plans to commit suicide, but eventually she participates in the rebuilding of District 12, and devotes herself to creating a material history of the district. She creates a book that "begins with a person's picture. A photo if we can find it. If not, a sketch or painting by Peeta. Then, in my most careful handwriting, come all the details it would be a crime to forget. Lady [the goat] licking Prim's cheek. My father's laugh. Peeta's father with the cookies. The color of Finnick's eyes."[436] The book records history through a

[435] Ibid., 370.
[436] Ibid., 387.

material record of corporeal existence. Her entries record faces, voices, and memories linked to physical contact. This is followed by a return to action on behalf of their new community in District 12: “Peeta bakes. I hunt.” Katniss’s short sentences are complete with subject and verb, which link the body to action in minimal complete sentences.

For Katniss and the inhabiatnts of District 12, the return to embodiment is not only a rejection of their militarization, but also a rejection of the capitalist exploitation of their bodies. As people return to District 12 they choose not to re-open the coalmines that had previously kept them in poverty and exploited their labor for resources sent to the Capitol. Instead, they plant food and use the machinery from the Capitol to open a new factory where they will produce medicine, a product that helps the body rather than breaks it in service of capital gain. This ending situates Katniss’s creation of her own value outside of militarism within the survival of the entire community in District 12.

Because militarization stories portray a broader set of relationships between militarism and identity than the war story’s focus on soldiers, YAL such as *Ender’s Game* and *The Hunger Games* utilize linear narrative structure and a cohesive point-of-view to critique the process of militarization and serve as cautionary tales to young adults. Together, these texts also portray various modes of militarization, a marked change from the concerns of earlier YAL war stories that focused on anxiety over how boys deal with becoming soldiers.

4.4 Conclusion

Card and Collins specifically want us to think about the militarization of youth and the border between childhood and adulthood in our history of military conflict. In

writing *Ender's Game*, Orson Scott Card claims that "To me, the military didn't mean the Vietnam War…I had no experience of that, except for [my brother] Bill's stories."[437] Instead, he decided to make Ender a child partly because he read Bruce Catton's *Army of the Potomac* and was surprised to learn "that the soldiers were all so young and innocent."[438] Despite his claims that the novel was not influenced by the Vietnam War, his 1991 introduction to *Ender's Game* draws together the Civil War, Vietnam, and Desert Storm in his discussion of youth and their relationship to war. Suzanne Collins also drew on the continuity of war while creating *The Hunger Games*, citing both strategies of population control in ancient Rome and the atrocities of the Vietnam War.[439] Inspired to write the series after watching a reality television show that "pitted young people against each other for money," Collins worries that "people see so many reality shows and drama that when the real news is on, its impact is completely lost on them."[440] Collins speaks directly of the conflation between entertainment and war, one aspect of the slide into militarization. Orson Scott Card, in his response to adult criticism of Ender as too sophisticated for his age, articulates the troubling position of children as tools of war: "*Ender's Game* asserts the personhood of children…Children are a perpetual, self-renewing underclass, helpless to escape from the decisions of adults until they become adults themselves."[441] In their critique of the relationship between adults/agents of militarization and children/objects of militarization, Card and Collins question the

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[437] Card, *Ender's Game*, xiii.

[438] Ibid., xvii.

[439] James Blassingame, "An Interview with Suzanne Collins," *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 52, no. 8 (2009): 726.

[440] Ibid., 727.

[441] Card, *Ender's Game*, xx.

conception of adolescence as a distinct stage of life between childhood and adulthood,[442] much in the same way that the distinctions between war and peace have become blurred in an increasingly militaristic United States. It is this fluidity between childhood and adulthood that makes militarization texts suitable for adoption into multimedia platforms aimed at attracting a multigenerational crossover audience.

While the militarization narrative may draw a diverse crossover audience, the translation of these texts into other multimedia forms and products often run counter to the anti-capitalist and anti-militarism themes within *The Hunger Games* and *Ender's Game.* The erasure of critical edge in *The Hunger Games* is most apparent in the licensing of the brand to sponsor products. In portraying the Capitol as a vapid, hyper-materialist culture that exploits the labor of some citizens to support the wealthy lifestyle of others, *The Hunger Games* makes it very clear that the military capitalist system of Panem is responsible for Katniss's conscription in the Hunger Games and unwilling participation in the civil war. The film adaptations of *The Hunger Games* stick to this theme for the most part, but the marketing and brand partnerships surrounding the films often ignored the text's overall themes. For example, the franchise production company Lionsgate launched "Capitol Couture," a marketing website featuring "Capitol-friendly looks from high-end designers such as Alexander McQueen."[443] This platform specifically targeted wealthy fans, enticing them to participate in a fashion industry that mirrors the Capitol's exploitation of low-wage workers to sell high-priced fashion to

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[442] Day, "Liars and Cheats: Crossing the Lines of Childhood, Adulthood, and Morality in Ender's Game.(Critical Essay)," 208.

[443] "Top 5: 'Hunger Games' Special," *Advertising Age* 83, no. 13 (2012).

Capitol-like citizens in the United States. This was followed by a release of the slightly more affordable "Capitol Collections" line of make-up from Cover Girl, which used a "fantasy meets reality" theme to re-create the Capitol's aesthetic body modifications that so repulsed Katniss in the books. The ads for this Covergirl line scored lower than the average on the Advertising Benchmark Index, although it scored higher than other Cover Girl products.[444] These ads could have been unsuccessful because of their conflict with the series themes, or for reasons pertaining to the advertising context rather than their relationship to the texts. Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Inc. directly contradicted the text's anti-capitalist these when it released co-branded *Hunger Games* television advertisements during NFL games. Chief Marketing Officer for Chrysler, Olivier Francois, claimed that the movie was in keeping with the "the values shared with our three brands—the 'rebellious' Dodge, the 'hard working' Ram and the resilience of Chrysler."[445] Another company representative, Paula Kupfer, proudly stated that "Through Chrysler, Ram and Dodge, we have the unique opportunity to highlight the wealth of the entire 'The Hunger Games' franchise through each iconic brand's individual story."[446] In both of these comments, the cars are meant to be metaphors for the child tributes conscripted in the games; but comparing the individual humans fighting against capitalism to models of cars, claiming the "wealth" of the films, the brand works against the anti-capitalist message about the consumption of children as entertainment.

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[444] "The Brands of 'Catching Fire'," *Advertising Age* 84, no. 42 (2013).

[445] P. R. Newswire, "Fca Partners with Lionsgate, "the Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2," on Co-Branded Marketing Campaign Featuring Chrysler, Dodge and Ram Brands," *PR Newswire US* (2015).

[446] Ibid.

With the exception of Cover Girl, which tends to market to younger women and is affordable for adolescents, all of these marketing campaigns are designed for adult consumers. The price tags attached to these products, and the reputation of Dodge as an all-American brand of truck for farming, construction, etc. place these products within the world of adults. Interestingly, Capitol Couture was a web campaign, most likely to be visited by adolescent fans of the book series, but shopping on the site was too expensive for most teens. The marketing of the Hunger Games for adults seems to validate the relationship between adulthood and militarism in the Hunger Games: adults are pro-capitalism and militarism.

The film adaptation of *Ender's Game* did not result in lucrative co-brand licensing or become a box office hit and cannot be compared to *The Hunger Games* in terms of multimedia marketing. However, the marketing of the book has changed over time in ways that reflect its re-branding for multigenerational audiences. Originally published and popularized as an adult science fiction novel, *Ender's Game* has since been re-marketed to children. In "Judging a Book by Its Cover: Publishing Trends in Young Adult Literature," Cat Yambell notes that in the early twenty-first century publishers transitioned to "less realistic, more representational covers—no people, just images—to achieve cross-gender, multicultural appeal."[447] Scholastic adopted this approach for *The Hunger Games,* but the opposite approach was taken for the 2002 re-print of *Ender's Game.* Perhaps hoping to capitalize on the revival of YAL dystopian fiction, publisher Starscape featured a cover with a "young Ender, dressed in a blue flash suit, in various

[447] Cat Yampbell, "Judging a Book by Its Cover: Publishing Trends in Young Adult Fiction," *Lion and the Unicorn: A Critical Journal of Children's Literature* 29, no. 3 (2005): 367.

acrobatic positions, presumably in the battle room."[448] The change in covers promotes the text as YAL sci-fi rather than the book's original adult sci-fi market. The new film tie-in covers also feature Ender, but his age is ambiguous. These covers also feature images of the adult characters, perhaps appealing to adults through the image of Harrison Ford as Colonel Graff.

Interestingly, the youthenization of the new book cover conflicts with how the book is used by adults. In his 1991 introduction to the text, Card published excerpts from letters he received from adult readers in which some adults argue that Ender is too sophisticated, and is therefore unrealistic.[449] Adults with military backgrounds completely ignore the adult/child dichotomy in favor of its accuracy in depicting the experience of military life. Card received a letter from a helicopter pilot in Desert Storm who insisted that Ender's experience of training matched his own training as an eighteen year-old soldier. The text has also been adopted as core reading for the U.S. Marine Corps. In "A Study of Military Theory," 1st Lt. Jordan A Bashek and Cpl. John S. Galloup suggest that *Ender's Game* can be used to bring "the theory of maneuver warfare to life, especially for young marines who can relate better to Ender."[450] But Ender is a six year-old, and he annihilates an entire civilization by age eleven. Instead of focusing on Ender's emotional and intellectual experience, Basek and Galloup promote the books as a way for officers to teach about the effectiveness of maneuver warfare, claiming that

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[448] Doyle and Stewart, "Ender's Game and Ender's Shadow: Orson Scott Card's Postmodern School Stories," 199.

[449] Card, *Ender's Game*, xix.

[450] Jordan A. Blashek and John S. Galloup, "A Study of Military Theory," *Marine Corps Gazette* 96, no. 11 (2012): 44-45.

Ender's Game reflects "an approach to war—a way of thinking about combat and how to thrive in it. In *Ender's Game* we find vivid examples of both styles put into practice by various armies in the battle room…the leadership principles and tactical lessons contained in the novel have something valuable for Marines of all grades."[451] The marines completely ignore the critique of militarism and avoid recognizing that the soldiers in the book are children who are forever damaged by their inability to voice their objection to militarism.[452] Ultimately, the marketing of militarization stories and their utilization for adult purposes seems to provide a space in which the books can be read against their opposition to capitalism and militarism. This is an important consideration as the militarization narrative makes its way into YAL romance, prep school narratives and supernatural subgenres. In texts that use militarization narratives without critically engaging with militarism (*Twilight*, *Divergent*, etc.), the use of the militarization narrative normalizes and romanticizes the militarization of children. The erasure of anti-capitalist, anti-militarism themes through multigenerational marketing may have a similar result.

[451] Ibid., 46.

[452] It is worth noting that Card himself sees all readings as valid, including the use of the text by the Marine Corps for training purposes.

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Yampbell, Cat. "Judging a Book by Its Cover: Publishing Trends in Young Adult Fiction." [In English]. *Lion and the Unicorn: A Critical Journal of Children's Literature* 29, no. 3 (2013-10-14 2005): 348-72.

VITA

VITA

Allison Layfield

Education

2016 **PhD in English, American Literature**
Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana
Field: 20th and 21st Century American Literature
Graduate Certificate: Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies

Dissertation: Pedagogy and Profit: Multiethnic Literature, Gender and Young Adult Publishing

Committee: Bill V. Mullen (chair), Patrocinio Schweickart, Janet Alsup, Jennifer Freeman Marshall

2010 **MFA in Creative Writing**
New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico
Primary Genre: Poetry
Minor: Women's Studies

Committee: Connie Voisine (Chair), M. Katherine Jonet, Sarah Haeglin

2004 **BA Literature**
University of California, Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, California
Major: Modern Literature
Concentration: Creative Writing

Publications

Refereed Articles
"Asian American Literature and Reading Formations: A Case Study of Nora Okja Keller's Comfort Woman and Fox Girl." *Reception: Texts, Readers, Audiences, History* 7, no. 1 (2015): 64-82.

"Identity Construction and the Gaze in *The Hunger Games." The Looking Glass: New Perspectives on Children's Literature* 17.1 (2013). http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/ojs/index.php/tlg/article/view/389/382.

Reviews

"First Opinion: Does International Exploration = Self Exploration?" Rev. of Wanderlove by Kristen Hubbard. *First Opinions, Second Reactions* 5.2 (2012). http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/fosr/vol5/iss2/5.

"Embodiment, Verbs, Poetics." Rev. of *Beauty is a Verb* edited by Sheila Black, Jennifer Bartlett and Michael Northen. *Drunken Boat* 15 (2012). http://www.drunkenboat.com/db15/beauty-is-a-verb.

Poetry

Excerpts from "The Serpent." *Lingerpost* 3 (Jan 2012).

"What is it and how do you use it." *Delirious Hem* (April 2011). http://delirioushem.blogspot.com/2011/.

"To My Darling Daughters, I Leave My Wig." *New Delta Review* (2010).

Presentations and Workshops

March 2016	Duke University Feminist Theory Workshop
Feb 2016	"Adult/Adolescent Border Crossings in American War Literature." American Literature Association Symposium, San Antonio, TX.
Nov 2015	"Her Many Faces: Empowering Minority Women." Invited Speaker, LYNX of Omega Phi Chi Multicultural Sorority, West Lafayette, IN.
Sept 2015	"Multicultural Education and the Reception of *The House on Mango Street.*" Reception Study Society Bi-Annual Conference, Multicultural Reception and Author Reputation Panel, Fort Wayne, IN.
Sept 2013	"Comforting Narratives: A Reception Study of Nora Okja Keller." Reception Study Society Bi-Annual Conference, Reception of Asian American Literature Panel, Milwaukee, WI

March 2013	"Reality TV and the Gaze in *The Hunger Games.*" National Popular and American Culture Conference, Adolescence in Film and Television Panel, Washington D.C.
March 2011	"Understanding U.S. Feminist History." Lecture for Women's History Month, American Corners, Vesprem, Hungary.
Feb 2011	"Political Poetry and Writing Past Difficulty." A Poetry Craft Workshop, Creative Writing Lecture Series, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary.

Teaching Experience

I designed, graded and was the sole instructor for the following courses.

Literature Purdue University, 2 semesters	**Great American Books** This survey of important American novels (1860-present) covers a diverse range of literary movements as wells as cultural issues such as race, gender, socioeconomic class, ethnicity, religion, and the role of individuality in American culture.
Oral English Purdue University, 2 semesters	**Classroom Communication for International Graduate Students** This course helps international students improve their oral English communication before teaching undergraduate courses. Individual instruction includes evaluation and development of pronunciation, enunciation, syntax, vocabulary, and presentation skills.
Rhetoric and Composition Purdue University, 2 semesters	**Digital Rhetoric and Environmentalism** This English course encourages critical thinking about social and political contexts that affect environmental issues worldwide. Students use a variety of compositional mediums such as blogs, screencasts, videos and traditional essays.
Rhetoric and Composition 2 semesters	**Digital Rhetoric and Composition** Students think critically about how technology shapes our world, ourselves and the way we compose and share knowledge. Students learn how to use technology while improving their composition skills in a variety of mediums such as screencasts, films and websites.
New Mexico State 2 semesters	**Zombies & Rhetoric: Writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences** This intermediate rhetoric and composition course encourages students to think critically about pop culture and the relevance of messages in zombie texts. Students analyze fiction, films and write a research paper related to current events.

4 semesters hybrid, 1 online	**Composition and Rhetoric** Students develop the language and writing skills expected in college level writing assignments. They learn research techniques, how to build cohesive arguments, provide evidence to support written arguments, and cultivate communication skills.
Creative Writing New Mexico State 1 semester	**Undergraduate Poetry Workshop** This introductory class encourages students to see poetry as a practice of challenging and questioning the way we live and the ambiguities we face daily. Students study traditional topics within poetry (love, death, politics, religion/philosophy) as well as a variety of poetic forms (sonnets, elegies, prose poems).
1 semester	**Introduction to Creative Writing** This course combines writing exercises, workshops and critical readings of fiction, non-fiction and poetry to give students an introduction to a creative writing. Students read a wide variety of U.S. and international literature to develop their own creative libraries.
Business Writing New Mexico State 1 semester online	**Business and Professional Writing** Students analyze the online identity of a professional in their field and then develop their own online professional identities. The course then covers traditional business documents such as memos, resumes, and proposals. Students collaborate on a final project in which they develop a website.
Stockton CA 1 semester	**Ninth Grade English** Lincoln High School
Stockton CA, 1 semester	**Substitute Teacher, Grades 3-12** Lincoln Unified School District

Academic & Community Service

2016	Chair of Mentorship Program Proposal Committee, Asian Pacific
2015-2016	American Caucus
2013-2015	President Mentor, Asian Pacific American Caucus
2014-2015	Event Coordinator and Treasurer for Asian Pacific American Caucus
2013	President of Purdue Graduate Student English Association
2011-2015	Learning Communities Instructor, Environmental Studies
2010	Assistant Editor, Bone Bouquet Journal
2009-2010	Writer in Residence, Alma d'Arte Charter High School, Las Cruces, NM
2009-2010	English Department Online Course Coordinator, New Mexico State
2009-2010	University

2007-2009	Online Course Workshops for Instructors Writing Center Consultant Editorial Assistant, Poetry, Puerto Del Sol Literary Magazine, Las Cruces, New Mexico

Awards & Fellowships

2016	Feminist Studies Travel Scholarship, Purdue University
2011-2015	Purdue Doctoral Fellow to Enhance Diversity
2015	Mary Gitzen Award for Teaching Excellence, Purdue University
2015	Purdue Research Foundation Summer Grant Recipient
2014	Learning Community Teaching Excellence Award, Purdue University
2013	Quintilian Award for Excellence in Teaching, Purdue University
2013	Asian Studies Literary Award, Purdue University